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John O'Sullivan's *The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister*

NATIONAL REVIEW

ELECTION 2006

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John J. Miller • John O'Sullivan • Ramesh Ponnuru
Mark Steyn • Byron York • The Editors

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DECEMBER 4, 2006 VOL. LVIII, NO. 22

NATIONAL REVIEW

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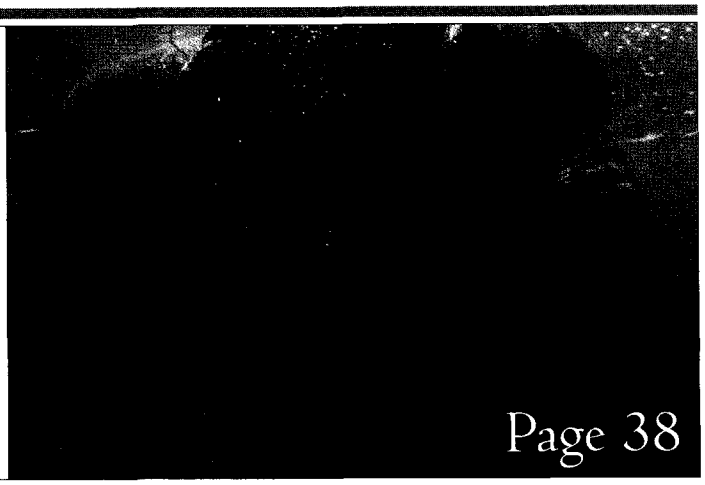
■ ELECTION AFTERMATH

The Way Back

As enjoyable as a Republican civil war would be, there may not be many people inside the party willing to wage it. Here are a few ideas on what Republicans should do instead.

By Ramesh Ponnuru



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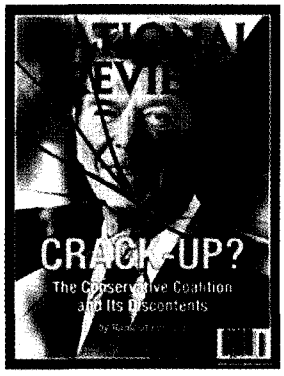
letters to the editor

COUCH POTATOES

In last issue's "Conservatives on the Couch," Ramesh Ponnuru writes, "Limited government does not have enough passionate supporters to overcome the supporters that individual statist programs have when they are being debated." Limited government would have many more supporters if conservatives tried to convince voters that they'd benefit even if their pet program were gored. The post-Reagan GOP has suffered a lack of vision resulting in a paucity of ambition. Tax reform (especially if launched around April 15) would be a shorter route to government overhaul than a bit-by-bit dismantling of statist programs.

Toni Mack
Houston, Tex.



COUNTING BUREAUCRATS

A cursory glance at Kevin Hassett's chart portraying government employees gained or lost in a given administration might lead one to believe that Clinton greatly reduced the size of government ("Where Clinton Beats W.," Nov. 6). As Hassett notes in his piece, the chart does not include the millions of government contractors Clinton employed. But it is misleading for other reasons as well. First, Clinton offered a $25,000 buyout to employees who were approaching retirement or who were already eligible to retire—that is, he spent a great deal of money to encourage retirements that would have happened anyway. My office of 50 saw at least three employees retire as a result; two of them were subsequently replaced. Second, the creation of an additional workforce since 9/11 must be recognized: The Department of Homeland Security admittedly brought many existing agencies under its umbrella, but it also resulted in additional hires for border protection and airport security.

Loretta Park
Lewistown, Mont.

HARD CORPS

Ross Douthat's review of Clint Eastwood's *Flags of our Fathers*, like his commentary on Eastwood's journey leftward, was right on the mark ("Saint Clint," Nov. 20). The only error in the article is the description of John Bradley as a Marine medic. Bradley was in fact a Navy Hospital Corpsman. To be precise, he was a Pharmacist's Mate—which was the designation used during the Second World War.

John Sheridan
Via e-mail

HEADS IN THE SAND

Michael Fumento's "Covering Iraq" (Nov. 6) is the first article I have read that gets to the heart of the problem in the perception of the war here at home. I returned from Iraq six months ago, and while there I observed exactly what Fumento describes: Many reporters are lazy, irresponsible, or just don't want to tell the real story. I was an adviser to Iraqi special-police commandos who regularly went into Baghdad, Tel Afar, and Ramadi neighborhoods and dealt directly with Iraqi civilians and police. The units I accompanied probably had a broader experience of what was going on in those areas than traditional units did. They were designed to gather intelligence that our military units couldn't get, help us pinpoint insurgents, and eventually take over responsibility from our troops. We frequently sought journalists to go with us and observe these units in action, but were turned down each time by reporters who preferred to stay holed up in the Green Zone.

Maj. Dan O'Rourke
St. Louis, Mo.

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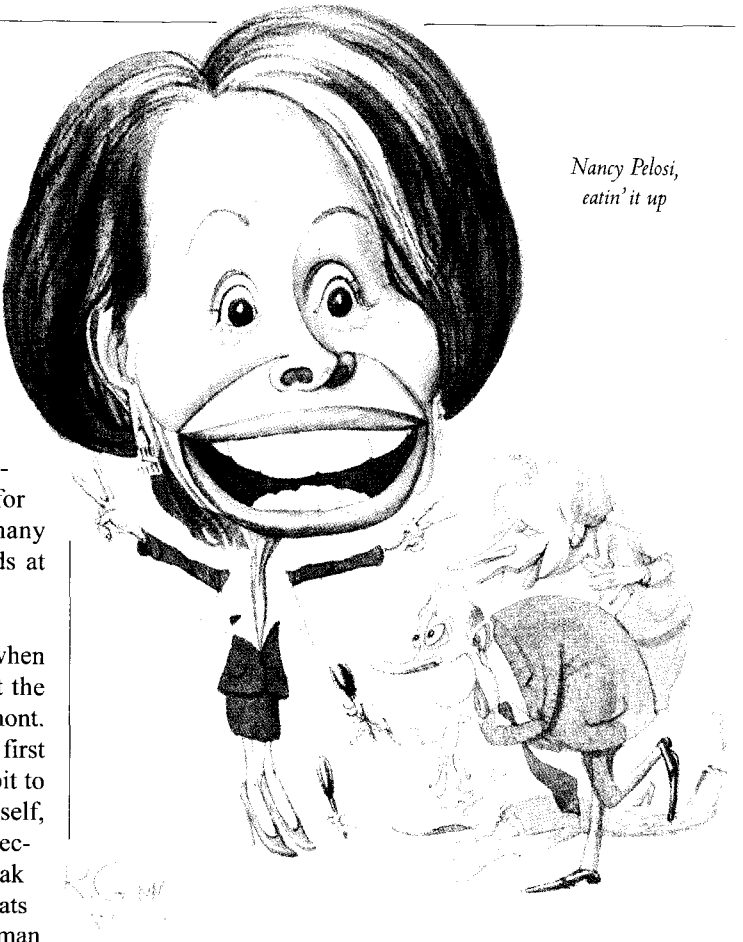
THE WEEK

■ Well, at least Lincoln Chafee lost too.

■ Following the elections, even more bad news hit the GOP. Although it was anticipated that Ken Mehlman would be stepping down as chairman of the Republican National Committee regardless of the election's outcome, his resignation is nevertheless an unfortunate loss for the party he has so tirelessly served. He delivered victory as manager of President Bush's 2004 reelection campaign, and as a White House political adviser he has been both a skillful tactician and a savvy strategist. Had Republicans taken more of his advice this year, Election Day would have been happier. His political acumen is coupled with strong conservative convictions and policy expertise. All this makes for a rare combination that will be sorely missed by the many people who are indebted to him—including his friends at NATIONAL REVIEW.



Nancy Pelosi, eatin' it up

ROMAN GENN

■ The election season got off to a grim start in August when Joe Lieberman, liberal supporter of the Iraq War, lost the Democratic primary to the bug-out millionaire Ned Lamont. The netroots, who had backed Lamont, gloried in their first actual victory at the polls. Energized, they added their bit to the Democrats' margin in November. But Lieberman himself, running as an independent, beat Lamont in the general election, 50 percent to 40 percent. (Alan Schlesinger, the weak Republican candidate, won only 10 percent.) The Democrats should learn from this the limits of radicalism, and Lieberman should remember—he does not have to learn it—the importance of fortitude in a good cause.

■ Pennsylvania's junior senator, Republican Rick Santorum, lost his bid for reelection. In his concession, he made no apologies for running a campaign focused on the War on Terror rather than piddling local issues. His was always a high-wire act: Pennsylvania has traditionally been hospitable to candidates who are conservative on social issues or on economics, but not both. Santorum, however, was willing to lead the fight for Social Security reform and against partial-birth abortion. Courageous conservatism just lost a champion.

■ It's true that Sen. George Allen ran a poor campaign. But his chief error was underestimating the lengths to which the media, and especially the *Washington Post*, would go to undermine him, and reacting badly to their attacks. Coverage of the "macaca" incident was justified, but the *Post* made it a front-page story—and a story about Allen's "racial insensitivity"—day after day in a transparent attempt to hurt him. The press, including the *Post*, then moved on to covering the non-story of the Jewishness of Allen's mother and his unwillingness to talk about it. Meanwhile, the press ignored his opponent Jim Webb's record of pro-Confederate sentiments, a record it would have flayed had it belonged to Allen. The *Post* took Webb's literary pretensions seriously, but refused to run a word about his plagiarism (revealed by National Review Online). Webb didn't win his Senate race; Allen lost his to the *Post*.

■ A silver lining on Election Day was the passage, by a margin of 58 percent to 42 percent, of the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, banning racial preferences in the state's universities and government agencies. The victory is especially heartening given the uphill fight the ballot measure faced: MCRI's advocates, led by Ward Connerly and Jennifer Gratz, were outspent two to one in advertising dollars. Their opponents included the state's political, educational, and business establishments. On the left, the radical group "By Any Means Necessary" led a consortium of passionate activists and lawyers who tried every trick in the book to keep racial preferences alive. Even Michigan's Republican party, either seduced or cowed by political correctness, joined the anti-MCRI alliance. In the face of all this, Michigan's voters sent

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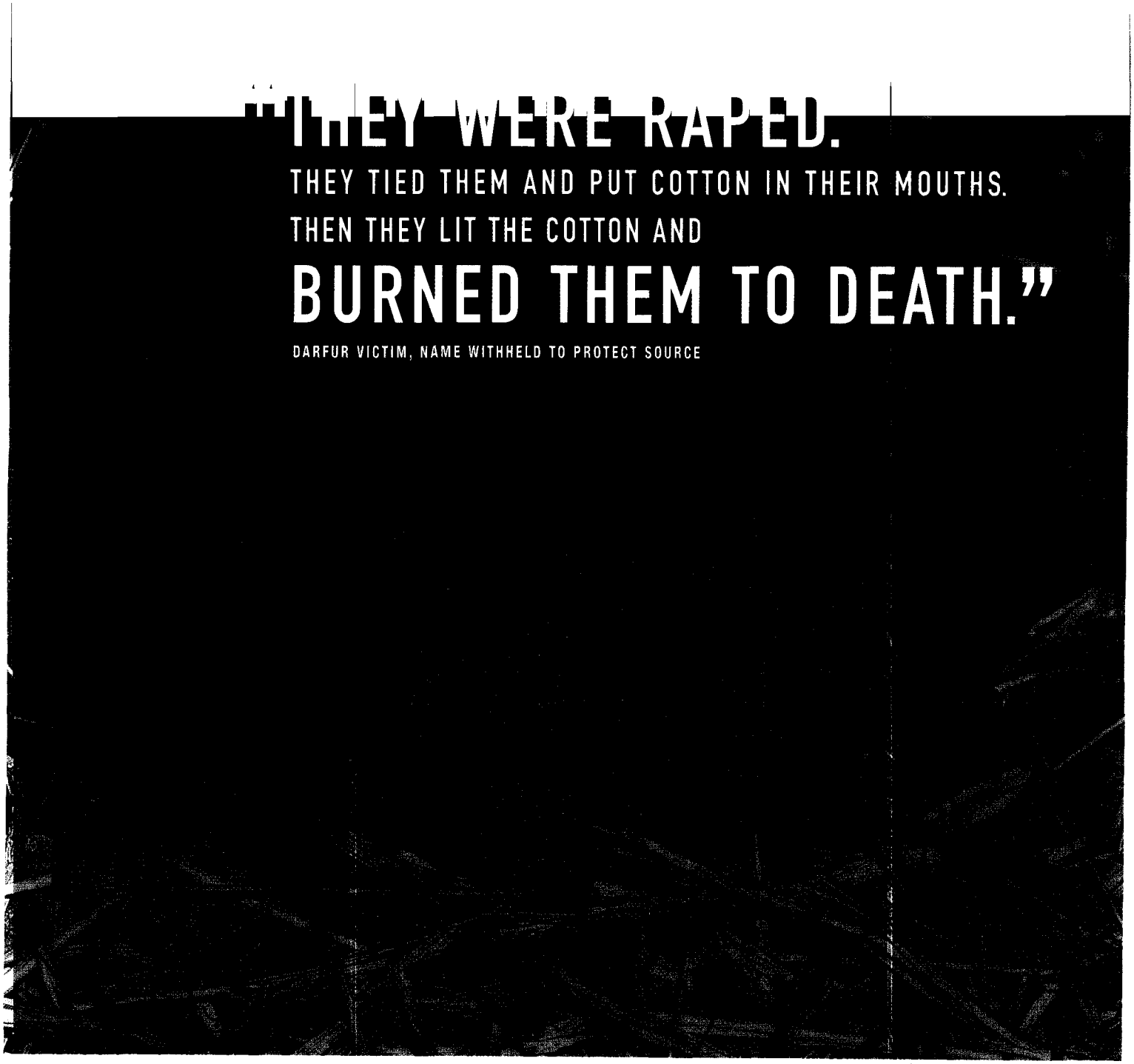
"THEY WERE RAPED.
THEY TIED THEM AND PUT COTTON IN THEIR MOUTHS.
THEN THEY LIT THE COTTON AND
BURNED THEM TO DEATH."
DARFUR VICTIM, NAME WITHHELD TO PROTECT SOURCE

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THE WEEK...

a simple message: People should not be treated differently on the basis of their skin color. Already, the academic elite have recoiled. Speaking at a press conference shortly after MCRI's passage, University of Michigan president Mary Sue Coleman vowed defiance. Explaining that her university would explore every measure to fight the new law in court, she repeated three times: "We are Michigan, and we are diversity!" In other words: Discrimination forever!

■ Cloning won a victory, of sorts, in Missouri. Voters there narrowly approved a constitutional amendment that purports to ban human cloning. The fine print, however, actually protects the cloning of human embryos for research. The good news for cloning advocates, then, is that they can prevail in a socially conservative state. The bad news is that they can do so only with lies, a massive financial advantage, and celebrity endorsements.

■ Diebold, one of the biggest manufacturers of computerized voting machines, was until recently headed by a CEO who happened to be a vocal supporter of President Bush. So suspicious minds inquire: What if Republicans are rigging the machines? Writing in the *New York Times* in 2003, Paul Krugman sought to blow the lid off: "You don't have to believe in a central conspiracy to worry that partisans will take advantage of an insecure, unverifiable voting system to manipulate election results. . . . The credibility of U.S. democracy may be at stake." That theme was rolled out again this election season on left-wing blogs and in the print media. There was even an HBO documentary, *Hacking Democracy*, which emphasized the danger of Diebold disenfranchisement. But then, just as the paranoia reached its peak, a funny thing happened: The Democrats won on Election Day. As suddenly as they had blared to life, the alarm bells fell silent. The critics paused for a moment, then burst out in a new refrain: *The people have spoken! The realignment is here! Democracy works!* And so the Diebold villain has retreated to the shadows—for the next two years, at least.

■ As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Arlen Specter bent over backward to make the committee's top Democrat, Patrick Leahy, happy. Specter reached a deal with House Republicans over the Patriot Act, for example, and then walked away from it when Leahy objected. Now that Leahy will run the committee, no doubt Republicans can expect the same solicitude. Right? Republicans who have less faith in human nature should consider whether Specter, having negotiated so poorly when Republicans were in a position of strength, will negotiate better from a position of weakness—and whether he ought to remain the top Republican on the committee.

■ John Bolton still has not been confirmed as America's U.N. ambassador—and he probably never will be. This is the fault of Democrats, of course, but it is also the fault of two Republicans: Sens. Lincoln Chafee and Richard Lugar. Lugar is the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (at least for another few weeks). Guided by an undue concern for the feelings of committee Democrats, he held unnecessary new hearings on the nomination that, in practice, became an opportunity for Democrats to recycle their spurious attacks on Bolton. Chafee, a liberal in Republican clothing, joined them, and became the critical vote. He backed Bolton's nomination a year ago but refuses to do so this time. In blocking the nomination, he has empowered the Bush-hating Democratic mainstream to hinder the administration's implementation of its foreign policy. That is neither check nor balance, but vanity.

■ "It is much more important to kill bad bills than to pass good ones," said Calvin Coolidge. As congressional Republicans prepare to play defense, they might take heed of the 30th president's advice (which was tendered to his father on Coolidge Sr.'s election to the Vermont state senate in 1910). Go defense!

■ The Center for Constitutional Rights is a left-wing group that pries off bits of the Constitution and uses them to gouge the country. Their latest project is a suit, in a German court, charging soon-to-be-former defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld with war crimes. The plaintiffs they represent are former and current inmates of Abu Ghraib and Gitmo. Abu Ghraib was the work of rogue reservists, serving under a slack-handed general of military police. At Gitmo the inmates eat, sleep, pray, exercise, and throw their urine and

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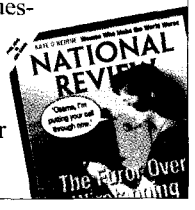

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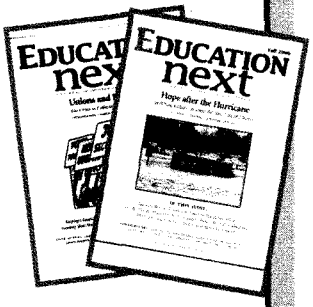

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The Whack-a-Charter Game

Thwarting competition to public schools

Teacher unions and other charter opponents openly wage war against charters. But there is also evidence of a perhaps more damaging, less public, war. Interviews with more than 400 charter school operators from coast to coast have revealed widespread combat. The goal appears to be to stop charter schools in any way possible. The resistance may take place at the school's inception, when it first looks to purchase a building and comply with municipal zoning laws. It may come when opponents play games with transportation, when legal barriers are tossed in the way, or when false information about charters is widely disseminated.

—Joe Williams

The Private-Public School Debate

Careless measurements give the public the wrong information

According to a recent National Center for Education Statistics–sponsored study, students attending private schools performed better than students attending public schools. But after statistical adjustments were made for student characteristics, the private school advantage among 4th graders disappeared, giving way to a 4.5-point public school advantage in math and parity between the sectors in reading. For 8th grades, after adjustments, private schools retained a 7-point advantage in reading but achieved only parity in math. But in fact, the study's measures of student characteristics are flawed; using the same data but substituting better measures of student characteristics, we found that three alternative models identified a private school advantage in nearly all comparisons.

—Paul E. Peterson and Elena Llaudet

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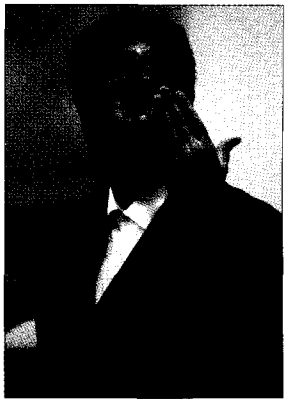
THE WEEK...

feces at the soldiers who guard them. There are no crimes at the latter, and the crimes that occurred at the former are not Rumsfeld's fault. One of the witnesses in the lawsuit is Janis Karpinski, the slack-handed general referred to above, who has now been demoted to colonel for her incompetence. No *cui bono* there, no sir. Under the doctrine of "universal jurisdiction," European courts have taken it upon themselves to right the world's wrongs at precisely the moment when European militaries are losing the power to do so. The general practice is dubious; the present pursuit of Donald Rumsfeld is an outrage.

■ Ted Haggard's fall as the head of the National Association of Evangelicals had elements of both tragedy and farce. The tragedy is his and his family's: They had to endure the public revelation of his trysts with a male prostitute and his purchase of methamphetamines. The farce came when the media got involved. Journalists speculated that the scandal, coming days before the midterm elections, might depress evangelical turnout for the Republicans. Not that they were rooting for that outcome, you understand. As it happened, any Haggard effect on the midterm elections was undetectable. Perhaps evangelicals were not amazed to discover the existence of sin, or even its presence among their pastors; or perhaps they did not think it had anything to do with the elections. Perhaps, that is, they were in this instance a tad more sophisticated than their cultured despisers.

■ A Nevada initiative to tax and regulate marijuana like alcohol failed, winning only 44 percent of the vote. But that's better than the 39 percent a similar measure won in 2002. As pro-pot conservatives in Gotham we have a peculiar perspective, but permit us to note that 44 percent is better than any New York Republican running for statewide office did this year. And Nevada potheads, unlike New York Republicans, are becoming more numerous.

■ Saddam Hussein has been sentenced to hang. An Iraqi court convicted him of ordering the murder of 148 men and boys, all civilians, in reprisal for a failed assassination attempt. (He has yet to answer charges of massacring more than 100,000 Kurds.) Amnesty International and similarly myopic groups have complained that the trial did not look exactly like business in The Hague.

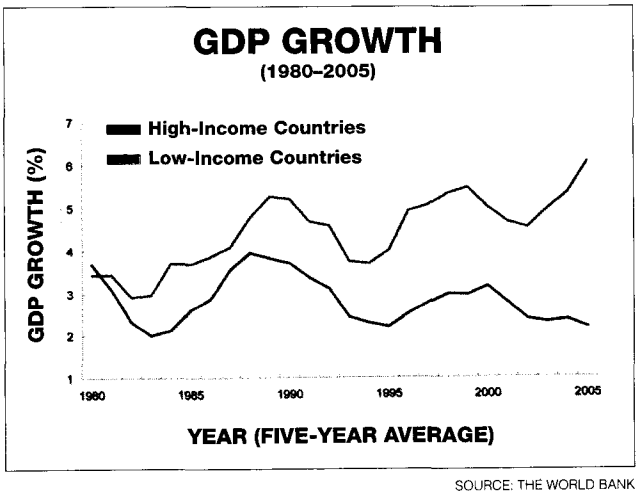


SCOTT NELSON/AFP

The 25-Year Boom

THE tendency of the news media to focus on the negative is well documented. It's not simply that shocking stories sell, but also that most good news just isn't interesting.

Economics can be an effective antidote to the pessimism such coverage can instill. When mundane good news piles up day by day, the cumulative effect can be striking. As an example, the accompanying chart plots GDP growth from 1980 through 2005 for two sets of the world's countries. The blue line represents GDP growth for countries that had per capita incomes of $10,726 or higher in 2005. The green line charts GDP growth for countries with per capita incomes below $875 in 2005.



SOURCE: THE WORLD BANK

There is much good news here. First, the basic trend in economic growth for both sets of countries is quite positive, and has been consistently positive for decades. Troubles come and go in this world, but the steadily rising tide of economic development is making everyone better off, big time.

More important, the rate of economic growth in poor countries has been significantly higher than in rich countries since about 1980. This means that the gap between rich and poor countries is closing, and that globalization is delivering prosperity to the world's poor in a manner unprecedented in world history.

How big has the change been? In 1980, the GDP per capita in the poorest group of countries was $255 (in 2000 dollars). In 2005, it was $477 (again, in 2000 dollars). Some might argue that this growth helps only the richer segments of developing countries, but the data suggest otherwise. Columbia professor Xavier Sala-i-Martin has found that the division of the world's economic pie is becoming more equal over time, even as the pie itself grows.

It's highly likely that some financial crisis will cause some developing country to suffer economically in the next few years. When it does, the bad news will likely lead capitalism's usual detractors to rail against globalization and trade, and then call for sweeping new government action. When that time comes, remember this chart, and think a happy thought.

—KEVIN A. HASSETT

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Twinkle, twinkle little star, star, star, star

Morningstar Overall Rating™ 10/31/06*

Ave Maria Catholic Values Fund AVEMX	Ave Maria Growth Fund AVEGX	Ave Maria Bond Fund AVEFX
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The Week...

But they are demanding that Rome be built in a day. A former tyrant has been held to account in an open and transparent trial, with procedural rights that allowed a vigorous defense. His judges will publish all of the evidence and testimony on which they based their decision. And he will receive an automatic appeal. Nothing like this has ever been seen in the Arab world. For decades, the Left has damned America for propping up dictators simply because they were "our" sons of bitches. It might, then, voice its gratitude when America delivers one such dictator to impartial justice. We're still listening. Whatever the Bush administration's failures in prosecuting the Iraq War, Saddam's menace is ended, and the Iraqi people have been given a chance to build a better future.

■ After 16 years in the wilderness, Daniel Ortega has returned to power. The former Sandinista strongman won the presidency of Nicaragua with 38 percent of the vote in a five-man race. Once the Soviet Union fell, some radicals in Ortega's part of the world changed their stripes—Cheddi Jagan, the Guyanese Communist; Michael Manley, the left-wing Jamaican. But now Hugo Chávez has arisen as a source of mischief. Add one more boiling pot to a full stovetop. N.B.: Ortega ran a pro-life campaign. Triangulation?

MIGUEL ALVAREZ/AFP

■ North Korea has agreed to return to the six-party talks over its nuclear program. Well, *that's* a relief. We can expect Kim Jong Il to beat his sword into a ploughshare any day now . . . The risk of the talks is that they will create a façade of diplomatic progress when in fact there is none, and that the U.S. will offer concessions it should not make. Unfortunately, this outcome is not unlikely. A senior administration official tells us that the U.S. has agreed to put its financial sanctions against North Korea on the negotiating table. Condoleezza Rice's State Department apparently thinks the sanctions are hurting the North's "legitimate" business interests. President Bush, to his demerit, shares this outlook. That might make sense if the Kim regime weren't fundamentally a criminal enterprise, and if we had any reason at all to think it could be reformed. But it is, and we don't, and our goal ought to be to undermine it, not enrich it. What happened, Mr. President, to the Axis of Evil?

■ Panama has just won a temporary seat on the U.N. Security Council—a seat that Chávez's Venezuela came very close to winning instead. Apparently it does marvels for your popularity at Turtle Bay to denounce the U.S. president as Satan and cozy up to Kim Jong Il and the Iranian mullahs. Guatemala was also seeking the seat, and had been in a deadlock with Venezuela. In the end, both countries bowed out to make room for Panama. That result is satisfactory; the U.N. as a whole remains anything but.

■ The rulers of Communist China have long enforced a one-child policy on urban married couples in order to limit the growth of the country's population. Now the city fathers of Beijing, the nation's capital, have imposed a one-dog policy on families. This is by way of tackling rabies, to which the authorities attribute 318 deaths nationwide in September. The website of the Beijing police department called on every dog owner to "create a harmonious society and be a civilized dog-raiser." Fair enough; but there is no good reason for China to remain a one-party state. The Communists just like it that way.

■ There seems to be an organizing principle at work in the universe to ensure that, whenever some event of grave moment occurs, there simultaneously occurs an event of similar magnitude whose content is scandalous, ludicrous, or prurient. Coverage of the first moon landing had to share newspaper space with Edward Kennedy's misadventure at Chappaquiddick. So it was again with the 2006 midterm elections, interest in which took second place in the attentions of, we fear, many of our citizens to the news that pop singer Britney Spears is to seek a divorce from dancer and rap singer Kevin Federline after little more than two years of marriage. Miss Spears informed Mr. Federline of her intentions by text message while the latter was taping a TV interview. A video clip of Mr. Federline receiving this message—he appears first to be disconcerted, then distraught—was soon flying around the Internet. With proper respect for Mr. Federline's distress, we point out that it could be worse: Women of the Muslim world, according to a 2001 sharia-court ruling in Dubai, can not only be notified of their spouse's desire for divorce by text message, but actually be divorced thereby.

■ Pop-music legend Sir Elton John has called for a ban on all religion. An outspoken homosexual who entered into a "civil partnership" with his boyfriend last year, Sir Elton has come to the conclusion that "religion promotes . . . hatred and spite against gays." In this same interview he promoted a little

San Francisco Values

The bridge is gorgeous, so's the bay.
Approaching airborne, tourists say
It's too good to be true; they're right.
Let's just say, parks turn Mother white
And smells require hankies soaked
To filter out what's being smoked.
Frisco is where Pelosi lives.
When she's in town, ask her what gives.

—W. H. von Dreele

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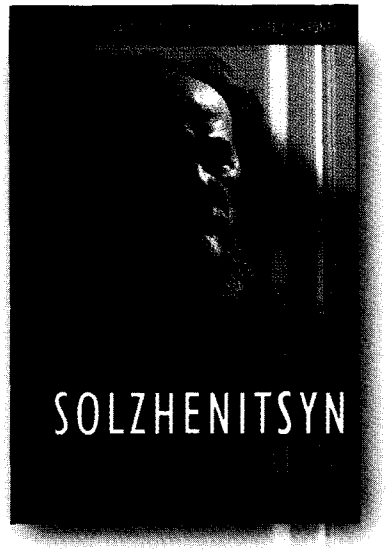

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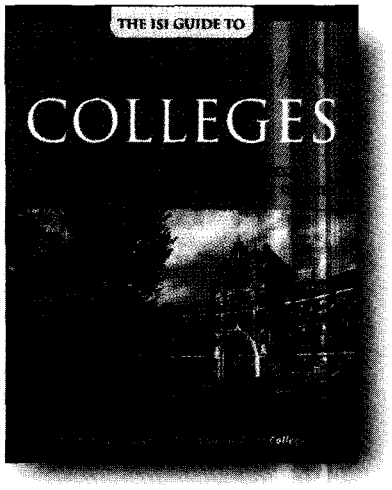

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hatred and spite himself, alleging that "organized religion . . . turns people into really hateful lemmings." Leaving aside the implied insult to lemmings—mild, herbivorous little creatures who do not, in fact, do the thing they are famous for doing—Sir Elton seems to have missed the point about hating the sin but loving the sinner. Nor does he seem to have noticed that hatred and spite toward homosexuals and many other categories of persons was a marked feature of the great atheistic despotisms of the last century, some of which imposed bans on religion as complete as anyone of Sir Elton's kidney could wish. Nor . . . well, never mind. With stupidity, as the German saying goes, the gods themselves struggle in vain—even when their worship is banned, probably.

POLITICS

Dégringolade

HOUSE Republicans have not lost this many seats since 1974, and Senate Republicans have probably had their worst election since 1986. Republicans lost six governorships. It was a comprehensive rout. No Democratic incumbents lost. Liberal and conservative Republicans both went down. The ballot-initiative picture was a little more mixed—Michigan banned racial preferences, and several states banned same-sex marriage—but even there, the results tilted left.

This defeat had a thousand fathers. There will be a temptation simply to blame President Bush for it, given the liberal interest in continuing to weaken him and the congressional Republicans' interest in avoiding blame. We'll get to Bush's share of responsibility in a moment. But let's not forget how many wounds the congressional GOP inflicted on itself.

Republicans lost at least 28 seats in the House. If party leaders had forced Don Sherwood, Bob Ney, and Mark Foley out in 2005 or early 2006, they would have cut that total by three and been able to spend more resources turning narrow defeats into narrow victories. Tom DeLay and Curt Weldon should have left earlier, too. In the Senate, Conrad Burns should have been forced out. Had Ohio governor Bob Taft been pressured to resign early, a number of races there might have turned out differently.

It is congressional Republicans, more than the president, who are responsible for the loss of the party's reformist credentials. Republicans were perceived not just as the party in government, but as the party of government. That perception, deadly for the relatively conservative party in our politics, was accurate. When it came to earmarks, or Social Security reform, or the Foley scandal, or lobbying reform, the Republican Congress seemed more interested in preserving its own power—or sticking with dysfunctional Hill traditions—than in the public good. The Senate inexplicably dropped the issue of judges. There will, and should, be changes in the Republican leadership now, starting with Denny Hastert's departure.

Iraq policy was obviously President Bush's major contribution to the debacle. It may very well be that even under the best of circumstances the war would have gone badly, and that one of its less important consequences would have been to hurt Republicans. But we cannot say that we have done everything possible to win it. If the short-term political pain of sending more troops to Iraq, or expanding the army, had made a difference in Iraq, it would have been worth doing, and it would have led to long-term political gains. Nor can it be said that the president has performed one of his principal wartime tasks—the maintenance of domestic will to win the war—as well as he could have. He kept to the "stay the course" mantra for far too long, and his manner of signaling American resolve was hard to distinguish from mulishness. Bush has a justified reputation for not listening to critics either inside or outside his party. When you don't listen to your critics, you can't engage them—and you lose your ability to affect the conversation.

These election results should cause Republicans to rethink a strategy in which the president and the congressional leadership joined. The congressional leadership did everything possible to avoid losing operational control of the floor: not letting mostly Democratic bills through, for example, or even Democratic amendments. The president, meanwhile, refused to veto almost anything so as not to fight the Republicans in Congress.

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Each set of decisions may have made sense as a way to build the party machine. But the combination, given the tightness of Republican control of the House, made Republicans the party of the status quo. Even when he was president and had a Republican Senate, Ronald Reagan was seen as the people's ambassador in Washington, not least by conservatives. If Bush had vetoed a few spending bills, even to be overridden, more conservatives would have been rooting for his team this year. A less partisan strategy may also have made it possible to build an ideological majority including some Democrats.

We trust that there will now be no shortage of Bush vetoes. Democratic control of the House, and possibly the Senate, means, however, that he will mostly be vetoing bills that the Democrats have designed to be politically costly to reject. Bush will have to find some areas in which he can cooperate with some Democrats. We hope that a pro-family tax reform is one such area.

The Democrats face some tough choices themselves. One reason they won was that they ran more conservative candidates, and especially cultural conservatives, than they have run in many years. If those Democrats are neatly folded into a Pelosi party, they won't hold their seats.

The Democrats' free ride on Iraq has ended. When bills to fund our operations in Iraq come up, they will have either to

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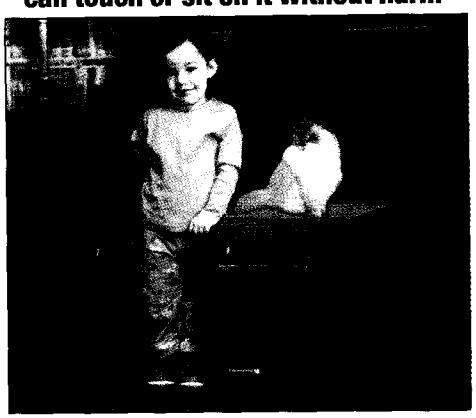

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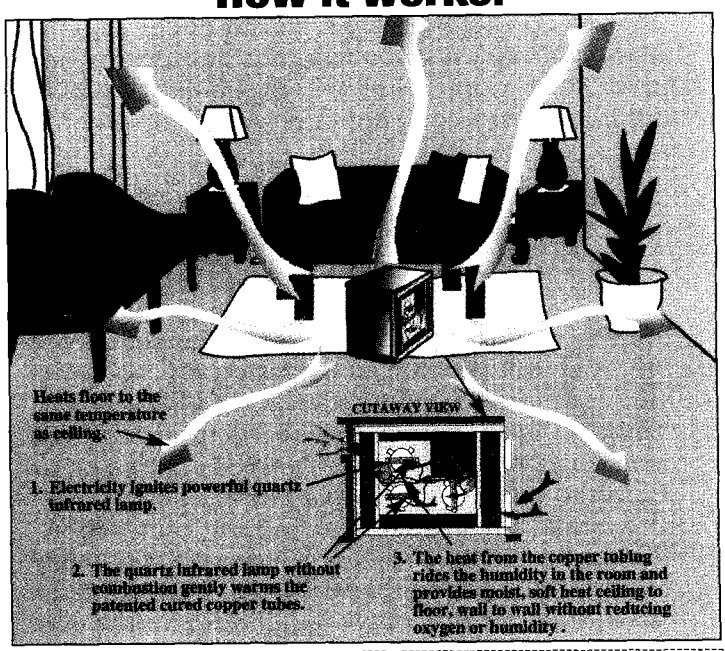
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Q. What is the origin of this amazing heating element in the EdenPURE®?

A. This advanced heating element was discovered accidentally by a man named John Jones.

Q. What advantages does infrared quartz tube heating source have over other heating source products?

A. John Jones designed his heating source around the three most important consumer benefits: economy, comfort, and safety.

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fund them, to refuse funding, or to attach conditions to funding. Whatever they decide, they will have shared responsibility for Iraq policy going forward. They will not be able to paper over their divisions.

While voters had understandable reasons for favoring the Democrats, we regret their decision. They have given both houses of Congress to the party of racial preferences, abortion on demand, higher taxes, lawless judging, and retreat from the War on Terror both abroad and at home.

We will not pretend to have any detailed plan for conservatives to move forward just now. But it may be worthwhile to state the obvious, since Republicans in Washington have been quite accomplished in ignoring it. President Bush will have to figure out a way to salvage a failing Iraq policy, and congressional Republicans will have to come up with a reason for holding office beyond the perks they will no longer enjoy.

AT WAR

Exit Rumsfeld

DONALD RUMSFELD's departure as secretary of defense was a necessary precondition for President Bush to win any measure of public support for the changes his Iraq policy needs. It was also justified on the merits. More than three years on, the Iraq War is arguably going more poorly than ever.

Rumsfeld had lost the ability to speak with much credibility about the war. He has become a radioactive figure partly because of vicious and unfair attacks on him from the left and (occasionally) the right, attacks against which we have often defended him. But he is also radioactive because he is associated with the biggest failure of the Bush administration, one that sank the Republican party on Election Day and that, much more important, threatens a dangerous and long-lasting setback to the interests of the United States.

Rumsfeld is a talented and principled public servant whose legacy will include many accomplishments. His invasion plan for Afghanistan was revolutionary, coupling small American teams on the ground with precision airpower. His Iraq invasion plan emphasized joint operations by the military's different branches, and substituted speed for mass in a lightning strike that toppled Saddam in weeks and defied all the skeptics.

Against opposition from the Pentagon bureaucracy, Rumsfeld has pushed to transform the military. The Army is moving from an emphasis on heavy divisions designed to fight the Soviets to a more supple system of smaller, rotating combat brigades. Rumsfeld has killed ill-considered weapon systems such as the Crusader, a laughably immobile piece of notionally mobile artillery. He has modernized the Pentagon's personnel system and reorganized its intelligence operations to make them more effective.

He has always been visionary on missile defense, realizing that the ABM treaty was a relic and that the U.S. had to respond to the new strategic environment created by the threat of rogue-state ballistic missiles.

Finally, he believed that civilians should run the Pentagon, and held to that belief despite the bizarre ad hoc alliance of disgruntled generals and media who thought the brass should be calling the shots. That was how the Pentagon had operated in the Clinton years, when it had basically slipped (inept) civilian control.

These achievements speak to Rumsfeld's strengths as a public servant. But over time, as conditions in Iraq have drifted downward, his failings have become more evident. Perhaps Iraq was inherently such a difficult venture that no defense secretary would have been able to handle it well. But at this juncture we can only conclude that Rumsfeld has made serious—perhaps catastrophic—mistakes.

It takes money to transform the military, and it also takes money to make the military larger. Both are needed. But Rumsfeld and Bush chose transformation over expansion, even though 9/11 had made it clear that the military was too small. Rumsfeld seemed to believe that he could skate through the Afghan and Iraq Wars with the current force, while at the same time transforming the military so that more combat power would eventually be available through various efficiencies. Given that Iraq evolved into a grinding counterinsurgency war requiring lots of troops on the ground, this was a terrible mistake.

Rumsfeld famously talks of 'unknowns,' but he failed to take the most elementary precaution of planning for the worst case.

Like Gen. Tommy Franks, he showed very little interest in planning for post-combat stability operations in Iraq. This was an error too, one for which we are still paying and from which we may never recover. Rumsfeld famously talks of "unknowns," but he failed to take the most elementary precaution of planning for the worst case.

After that, he never adopted the basic principle of waging counterinsurgency warfare: providing security to the population. He worried that too many American troops would alienate the population, and wanted Iraqis to provide security. These were reasonable positions. Experience, however, made it obvious that the Iraqis wouldn't soon be up to the task—so the only sensible alternative was to send more American troops.

All of this has brought us to a perilous position in which defeat seems more likely than victory. We hope the ascension of Robert Gates as Rumsfeld's replacement at least brings "fresh eyes" to Iraq policy, as Bush put it. Bush needs to send more troops to Baghdad in another attempt to secure the city, at the same time he takes on a few of the least objectionable Democratic ideas to put his war policy on a more bipartisan footing.

There was no hope of getting such bipartisan support as long as Rumsfeld stayed in office, and any new policy would have been hurt by its mere association with Rumsfeld. As Bush noted when announcing the change, Donald Rumsfeld is a brave man and a great American patriot. But his tenure as secretary of defense was deeply flawed.

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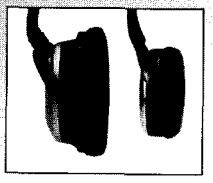

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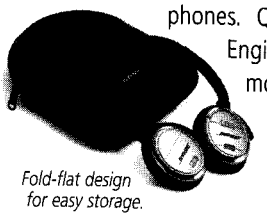

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notes & asides

■ *WFB was invited to address the Yale Political Union on October 27. He accepted on condition that he would write his own resolution. He proceeded to criticize Democratic spokesmen as if he were speaking from the socialist left.*

Ladies and gentlemen of the Political Union:

I can't say that I am actually happy to be back at the Political Union for this, my terminal speech on public affairs. Because this is the 60th anniversary of my first appeal to the Union to hear my liberating thoughts on public issues. The Political Union that night, in 1946, initiated its plodding record of rejecting my advice, which is why we have war, inflation, and inequality of income.

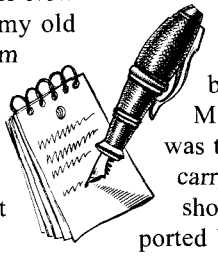
The one feature most to be dreaded in reappearances on the stage by retired performers is their reminiscences. Orations that include the words "*As I recommended 60 years ago*" are only just less offensive than those that begin, "*As I explained in some detail 60 years ago and will do so again now.*"

With that paralepsis, I nevertheless pause to recall a single splendid evening I had under your auspices, 16 years after that initial appearance. David Boren, the president of the PU, invited me to appear before you, and I accepted. A week later I saw in the *Yale Daily News* an article listing the speakers the PU had lined up for that fall. It included the General Secretary of the Communist party of the United States, Gus Hall. I sent a note to Mr. Boren and told him to drop my own name from the fall list, as I declined to appear on any roster of speakers that included an official of the Communist party. This was about the time Solzhenitsyn published his first book about life in the Gulag Archipelago, and I and a few others thought to seek an appropriate response to the conditions described, even in such attenuations as this little protest against the incorporation of a defender of the Gulag on a guest speakers' list.

But, I said to President Boren in my letter, I would agree to appear provided the resolution of the house was altered to read, "Resolved, The Yale Political Union should rescind its invitation to Gus Hall to appear as guest speaker."

David Boren, whose political acuity took him a few years later to the United States Senate, and then to the presidency of the University of Oklahoma, called me on the telephone to say that the officers of the PU, after much deliberation, agreed to debate my resolution as proposed. And then, in a tone of voice especially endearing when used by young men addressing people decades older, came the avuncular advice: "Mr. Buckley, I think I should warn you that you will get not more than ten percent of the vote arguing your resolution."

The evening aroused considerable campus interest, and the audience finally crowded into Sprague Hall. And there, that night, democracy had one of its great validating moments. When the vote came, a majority voted to rescind the invitation, even achieving notice of their deed in the *New York Times*. Needless to say, my old friend the Reverend William Sloane Coffin interjected himself into the picture the very next morning by inviting the Communist leader to make his appearance at Yale as a guest of Dwight Hall.



Well, Bill Coffin is not with us to gainsay your vote tonight, though perhaps we can predict that someone in the larger New Haven community will deplore your vote, at the conclusion of the proceedings, calling on everyone running for office under Democratic auspices in next week's elections to step down.

But whatever others say, your prescience here tonight will make its mark, in its own way, in its own time, and future historians of the Political Union will surely remark that while others dithered, the Political Union flashed out its insights and determination in recommending bold and conscientious political action.

I add only this, that when last spring I accepted your kind, recurrent invitation to rise from the dead and address the Political Union one more time, I said all right—and gave the language of the resolution I would be willing to espouse.

My letter was greeted by the president with what I could only interpret as stunned silence; but then, finally, with a message that the resolution I proposed would need to pass muster with the PU's governing council, leaving the whole business in abeyance. With the result that for a couple of golden summer months I comforted myself that I would after all be permitted to prolong my seven-year-old retirement from public speaking.

But then, in September, I had word from Vice President April Lawson reaffirming the invitation and accepting my proposed resolution. She added that I should be reminded that, as she put it, "one of the traditions of the YPU is to hiss to show disapproval and pound on our desks to show support for what a speaker is saying."

In fact I hadn't remembered this tradition. What Ms. Lawson did not mention was the more ancient tradition of carrying out the speaker on your shoulders when positively transported by enthusiasm for the resolution, for the speaker, and for the speaker's advocacy. That occurrence is rare, and has not happened to me since the day I persuaded your predecessors to disinvite the Communist speaker. I must ask you to be so kind as to rein in that impulse, should it seize you at the end of the evening. I am very old and very fragile, and might not survive forceful body contact with people of your age, with such agile minds and limber muscles, if inclined to such a demonstration.

* * *

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Well, on to my proposal, resting on a key postulate.

It is that Democrats are dominated by craven, greedy, hypocritical thought.

Kindly signify your acquiescence in this matter by pounding on your desks, as promised . . . Louder would be in order . . .

I begin with a modest tour d'horizon over public concerns as voiced by the Democratic party at its convention in Boston in July 2004.

The platform committee, listing its concerns alphabetically, began with "Abortion," #1, and ended, #24, with "Welfare and Poverty."

The policy perspective of the Democratic leadership was dismayingly conventional. The Democrats assembled in Boston came out vigorously against—*the budget deficit of the Republican party!* They even pledged that if given the power to govern, they would cut the national deficit in half in four years!

We have to wonder at the naïveté. John Maynard Keynes taught us with biblical authority, 70 years ago, that concern for national deficits is a residual superstition of outworn canons of capitalist dogma. It is not so easy, in parsing the Democrats' platform of 2004, as to say that the economies they contemplated amounted merely to reduced costs achieved by ending the lunacy of our Iraqi venture. No, the Democrats in Boston had much else in mind.

But why haven't they tackled the dominant challenge? The first question to ask is: How do the Democrats reconcile their opposition to a society of extremes in wealth and poverty, like our own, with their ambition to reduce the deficit? Because to do so would mean to reduce the scale of federal intervention in the lunatic dispositions of the marketplace. Here and there in their platform the Democrats touched down on this inequality allusively; but these were forced ideological landings, you remember, done quickly and all but unnoticeably.

Consider the matter of income inequality. The Democrats promised to revise the tax code. What they would do, they promised, was eliminate that much of the tax reduction package of the first Bush administration as inured to the benefit of Americans with incomes of $200,000 or more. The Democrats' contribution to equality! The Democrats of 2004 proposed keeping the tax breaks for Americans who earn less and eliminating them for those in the highest brackets.

That same platform of 2004 had lisped out a protest against benefits to the rich that work down through tax benefits for corporations, and vowed that these too would end.

They have not ended, and this is—in part—because Democratic legislators ran into economic realities. Yes, that is one part of the story. But another is the Democratic failure to revise realities. It is obviously difficult to revise tax and budget agendas when remedial action is repressed by antique orthodoxies that uphold the essential architecture of our capitalist system.

Democrats are dominated by craven, greedy, hypocritical thought.

What is the mission of the Democrats, if not to confront these pillars of superstition and offer the voters a repristinated vision of a society in which justice prevails over greed and acquisitiveness?

But perhaps you will agree that the principal delinquency of the Democratic majority lies in its epicene reaction to our war in Iraq. I will not take up your time, Mr. President, by simply reciting the conflicting records of critical Democratic leaders. Their last presidential candidate, John Kerry, educated in these halls, twice voted his approval of our Middle East extravagances, slavish to the perceived interests of Israel and logy with avarice for four million barrels of oil, and twice that many barrels gushing out of the earth in Saudi Arabia, great canyons of oil required to maintain the jet fleets of the extortionists who rule their country and continue to impoverish its lower classes; except, to be sure, for those few who seek escape by attaching their own lives to the cause, that terminal sincerity of the protester who gives his life to the cause of ending imperialist exercises in pursuit of wealth and privilege.

The Democratic platform of two years ago did not even go so far as to call for pulling back immediately our mis-sent forces from Iraq. And on the broader question of our continued reliance on militarism, the Democrats did not call for the rejection of the military. No, they actually called for a stronger military, one reoriented to international objectives, among them the education of the Muslim world, so that Islam could better recognize such purposes as we are allegedly engaged in in Iraq, never mind the failure of our Democratic leaders themselves to perceive the contradictions, the futility, the exorbitance of what we have done and are doing.

Some of you will think that our call tonight is futile. But we reject such cowardice. We address all Democrats running next week for office: Renounce, we say, the auspices under which you are running. Choose fresh careers, aimed at elevating our national sights from the materialist and parochial concerns that now blind our vision and enervate our consciences. I dare hope such weak-of-heart as cavil at our resolution underestimate your will and your courage.

What an opportunity you have tonight! The venerable undergraduate political organization of Yale University *saw through it all!* You focused, with unsparing precision, on the higher forces of democratic idealism. And you registered your willingness to take one brave step forward, by saying to Democrats everywhere: *You had your chance. Let us turn now to a greater challenge, to ends more sublime.*

So, ladies and gentlemen of this august house, join with me, I implore you, in advancing this holy goal, this sacred release from the old rigidities.

Aut vincere, aut mori.

Ave atque vale.

—WFB

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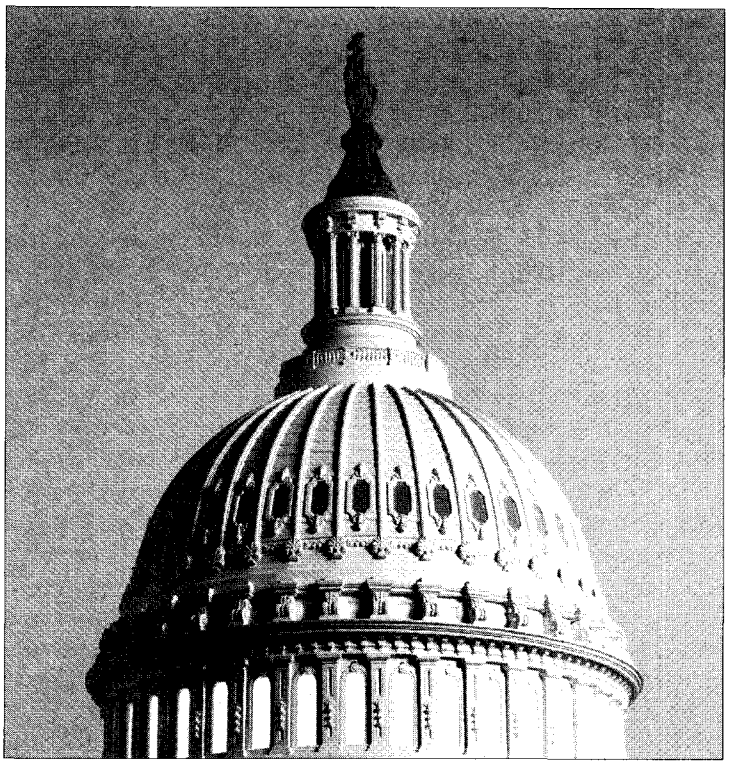

GOP Car Wreck

A tune-up won't fix it

JOHN HOOD

Well before midnight on Election Night, three things became clear. First, the Democrats were having a rollicking good election. Second, liberal pundits were having a rollicking good time talking about it. And third, fumbling Republican operatives and flummoxed conservative pundits had lost their perspective on the election, focusing on the narrow margins of some of the Democrats' House and Senate wins and rushing to assert that the voters weren't repudiating their ideas—just the GOP Congress and its corruption, profligate spending, and soggy leadership.

I'm not denying that some of the Democratic gains were won narrowly (though the same could be said for several Republican saves). And the corruption issue played a significant role in at least a dozen GOP House losses. But the scope of the Democratic victory surpasses any attempt to explain it away. It reflected something far more fundamental, and more challenging: As a vehicle for electing leaders and producing governing ideas, the Republican party is creaking and coasting. It doesn't just need a tune-up (like more get-out-the-vote programs) or a lube job (more money). It must be redesigned from bumper to bumper.

To comprehend the magnitude of the GOP's challenge, look beyond the federal races to state contests. Pre-election, Republicans held a majority of governorships (28–22) and a slight advantage in state legislatures. There are 99 legislative chambers (Nebraska's is unicameral and nonpartisan). Of the 98 partisan bodies, Republicans held 49 and Democrats 47. Two chambers were tied. As a whole, Republicans controlled 20 state legislatures and Democrats 19, with ten legislatures split between the parties. This parity in state governments had been one of the most significant and lasting products of the 1994 Republican revolution, which put an end to Democratic dominance at the state level (going into 1994, Republicans controlled legislatures in only eight states, versus 24 controlled by Democrats).

Things look very different now. The gubernatorial split is reversed, with Democrats holding 28 states. Two big-state losses were New York and Ohio, where Democrats Eliot Spitzer and Ted Strickland won easy victories. California retained Republican governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, but only because he no longer looks much like a Republican. Among the ten most populous states, only Texas, Florida, and Georgia now have mainstream—that is, conservative—Republican governors.

What's worse for the GOP, several notable Democratic governors first elected in relatively close races four years ago breezed to reelection in 2006. In Tennessee, Democrat Phil Bredesen won a 51–48 majority in 2002; in Arizona, Democrat Janet Napolitano managed only a 46–45 squeaker. In 2006, both Bredesen and Napolitano crushed their opponents and won support up into the 60s. In Michigan, Jennifer Granholm became a new Democratic star in 2002 with a 51–48 win. This year, despite a well-funded effort by businessman Dick DeVos and widespread public disaffection with Michigan's economy, Granholm soared to a 56–42 win. By contrast, Republican Tim Pawlenty won the governorship in Minnesota four years ago by a seven-point margin. This year, he offered the GOP a rare bit of good news by eking out a 47–46 reelection.

At the legislative level, Democrats gained at least 320 seats and nine chambers. Republicans gained only one chamber, the Montana house. They did manage a tie in two previously Democratic senates, in Oklahoma and Montana, but party control won't change because both states have Democrats in the appropriate executive-branch offices. There are now 55 Democratic chambers and 40 Republican ones. Democrats control both chambers in 23 states, Republicans in only 15. Even these numbers understate the GOP's

GEORGE DIEBOLD/GETTY

Mr. Hood is chairman and president of the John Locke Foundation, a state-policy think tank in North Carolina. His books include *Investor Politics* and *Selling the Dream*.

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problem: In many legislatures already Democratic but not by much, this election expanded the margins significantly. Where Republicans once dreamed of flipping chambers with a gain of a seat or two, they now see yawning gaps. Tim Storey, an analyst for the National Conference of State Legislatures, said at a post-election forum that there are now fewer legislative chambers controlled by narrow majorities (below 55 percent) than at any time since the late 1980s.

State elections are important and telling. They have a tremendous influence on public policies that affect people's lives on a daily basis. State courts decide major social and constitutional issues, usually without subsequent appeal to the federal Supremes. Moreover, from the ranks of state legislators and governors come future candidates for Congress and president. And from the work of governors and state legislators have come many of the most compelling policy ideas of the past decade, such as welfare reform and school choice.

There's still another reason Republicans need to get their act together at the state level, perhaps the most pressing one of all: The Census is coming. After 2010, legislatures in most states will redraw the lines for congressional and legislative seats. If Democrats retain their current edge, the U.S. House will get a lot more blue.

It simply won't do to chalk up Democrats' gains to bad luck, historical inevitability, or Mark Foley. Having talked to a number of political pros about the election results, I think the GOP's redesign has to include the following elements:

Better candidates. The Democrats had a far better round of candidate recruitment in 2006. Their standard-bearers were good fits for the constituencies they sought to represent—emphasizing fiscal moderation in fast-growing suburbs, social moderation in small towns and rural areas. Many had relevant political or professional experience. Quite a few simply looked good on television (sorry to be shallow, but it matters). Republicans will always have a disadvantage in candidate recruitment: Democratic activists want governments to expand in part so they can have jobs running governments. But the GOP had better figure out a way not to fall so far behind. They need a deeper, stronger bench.

Stronger coalitions. There are at least four identifiable elements of the Republican coalition that reached majority status in 1994: economic conservatives, social conservatives, hawks, and leadership voters (think Reagan-era upbeats and Perot populists). In 2006, each group was presented with reasons to peel off. Most voters didn't, but those who did—the ones who have always been less partisan and ideological in their voting behavior—tipped the balance. Some economic conservatives were angry about pork-barrel spending and federal deficits. Social conservatives felt let down by scandals and saw little progress on the issues they cared about. Hawks were disappointed in the president's apparent lack of a strategy for victory in Iraq. And leadership voters had their confidence in GOP competence badly shaken, not just by Iraq but also by the Katrina response and Capitol Hill ethics investigations.

The Democratic coalition—on paper, more diverse and unwieldy—was bound together in 2006 by sturdy ties. Its members wanted to regain power. They hated Bush. They thought he had stolen two elections from them. Thus radical environmentalists, pro-choice activists, peaceniks, urban pols, race-preference hustlers, union reps, and aging hippies all embraced moderate-to-conservative Democratic candidates with surprisingly few reservations.

Better messages. National security, tax cuts, and traditional values have brought Republican victories in recent cycles. They aren't enough to sustain an electoral majority. Swing voters want to hear solutions to practical problems in their everyday lives. Republicans must find their voice and effectively articulate sound, market-based solutions on education, health care, transportation, and other key domestic issues. It's hard but necessary work.

There's no need for Republicans to panic. It *is* true that their 2006 losses weren't much different from the historical averages. Many Democratic gains were by small margins, in otherwise GOP-trending areas. Traditionally Republican ideas about government and society *do* retain validity and salience, illustrated by the fact that so many Democrats won election by claiming them as their own. But Republicans need to take their present challenge seriously, and trash the self-serving talking points. **NR**

Abhorring A Vacuum

The demise of Hastert's majority.

JONATHAN MARTIN

As the Republican House majority stumbled toward its demise, Speaker Dennis Hastert evoked images of the kindly old uncle staying a bit too long at Thanksgiving dinner. In his presence, everyone around the table was smiling and laughing. But whenever he was out of earshot, they would mutter to one another in hushed tones, "When is he going to leave?" Or, perhaps more appropriately in Hastert's case, "When is he going to lead?"

According to Republican insiders on and off Capitol Hill, the answer to both questions was the same: never. Their party lost at least 28 seats in the House and six in the Senate, giving Democrats control of Congress and consigning Hastert to the lowly status of a rank-and-file minority member. But these loyal Republicans still don't have the heart to openly pin any blame on their "coach" for this season's performance.

Only in anonymous comments, like those whispers in the family kitchen, are Republicans willing to be frank in assessing Uncle Denny. "A bumbling Mr. Magoo" is how one House GOP leadership aide describes Hastert's current image. "He waited too long to say the buck stops here," says another top leadership staffer. "You can suggest he was not served well by his staff, but he's the one who hired his staff," points out a Republican lobbyist and former political operative. Almost nobody, though, wants to be identified by name criticizing Hastert. "Nobody wants to tap-dance on the grave," explains the top leadership staffer.

But did there have to be a grave to

Mr. Martin is National Review Online's political reporter.

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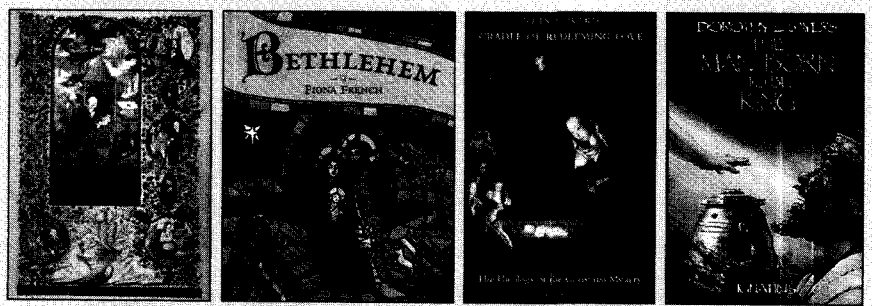

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dance on? While Iraq and President Bush's unpopularity are widely accepted as the chief culprits in the GOP's losses, the congressional Republicans badly hurt themselves with scandal. One exit poll found that 41 percent of voters rated corruption as "extremely important" in deciding whom to vote for. At least 10 of the 35 GOP-held House and Senate seats that switched hands did so because of incumbents' ethics. If the unpopularity of the war and the president were the sparks that would eventually burn down the House (and Senate), it was the air of scandal that provided "oxygen for the fire," as Virginia's Republican congressman Tom Davis puts it.

Few Americans, of course, could tell the difference between a Bob Ney and a Tom DeLay, but the stench of corruption wafting from the Beltway was unmistakable. One House Republican leadership aide speculates that voters probably didn't even know (or care) about the party affiliation of Louisiana congressman William Jefferson: "They just heard he had $90K in his freezer. It didn't matter that he was a Democrat. They just thought, 'Washington is a cesspool, throw them all out.'" It would have taken decisive action and strong leadership to battle this impulse, and Hastert wasn't up to it.

Hastert ascended to the top position in the House during the scandal-filled year of 1998. Speaker Newt Gingrich had stepped down under a cloud of bad publicity, and his resignation had been followed by that of congressman Bob Livingston, who had admitted to marital infidelity. In this environment, Hastert was chosen for Speaker in part because of his upright image. Conciliatory, fair-minded, and generous to a fault, the Illinois schoolteacher was everything that DeLay and former majority leader Dick Armey were not. Unfortunately, however, many of these qualities made him ill-equipped to manage the House majority. Because of his gentle operating style, Hastert was not a powerful Speaker in the mode of a Rayburn, O'Neill, or Gingrich. Congressman Davis, a habitual straight-talker, explains that Hastert is "a good man, a good coach, but not a leader." Davis adds, however, that the Speaker was merely "a creature of the caucus." It was the members of the House GOP who elected him.

The real beginning of the GOP's demise came with the accusations of illegal fundraising against majority leader Tom DeLay. Putting aside the legal merits of DeLay's case, the politics and perception of it were disastrous. In anticipation of DeLay's indictment, Republicans collectively decided to drop an internal rule forcing indicted leaders to step down from their posts—a reform they had adopted in 1993 to contrast their ethics with those of the Democratic majority. Motivated by a desire not to punish DeLay without cause, this move was understandable but costly: "The response was not to self-police, but to change the rule," says a lobbyist and former leadership staffer. Damage control came first. "It was viewed through the lens of 'How does this help us keep the majority?'"

Hastert's staff was reportedly wary of the rule change, but the Speaker ultimately deferred to his majority leader.

Dennis Hastert

ROMAN GENN

This was the "first sign of cancer in a body that was taken over by cancer," continues the lobbyist, and Hastert was the doctor who "saw the X-rays and ignored them."

The internal mechanism to examine ethical allegations against House members was broken. In February 2005, Hastert booted Ethics Committee chairman Joel Hefley from his position, seemingly because Hefley had been too aggressive in sniffing out Republican dirty laundry. "Hefley was run out of the [caucus] because he dared look at our own wrongdoing," says the same lobbyist who criticized the indictment-rule change. Hefley "had the moral high ground and we should've risen to his level instead of being drawn down below." Democrats balked at Hefley's departure and later sparred with Republicans over other internal rule changes Hastert pushed on the Ethics Committee. The result was a non-functioning internal-affairs unit unable to police member transgressions.

What Congress wouldn't do to itself, the Department of Justice would. Still, even when it became clear that individuals like Ney and former high-level staff members for DeLay were being probed by federal investigators in relation to the Jack Abramoff scandal, Hastert took little or no action. DeLay decided to step down from his leadership position only when a revolt of rank-and-file members became public. Ney was stripped of his chairmanship but allowed to stay in Congress. Initially, he was even permitted to seek reelection after a parade of witnesses had already implicated him in the Abramoff mess.

And then came what one Republican calls the "cherry on the sundae"—the Mark Foley scandal. Unlike the Ney and DeLay episodes, Foley's wrongdoing was uncomplicated. While Americans may not bother to understand the intricacies of earmark abuse or PAC money laundering, they can grasp cyber predation. Or, as a House leadership aide summed it up, "If you've got a story on *A Current Affair*, you're [screwed]."

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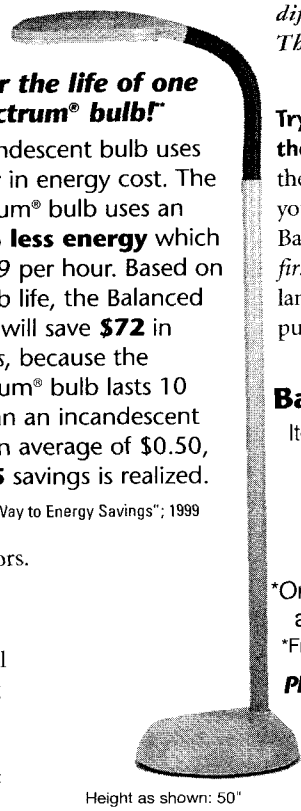

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Far from being seen as an isolated instance of one man's perversion, the Foley scandal was fueled by rumors that Hastert, his staff, and other Republicans may have known about Foley's inclinations years before they became public. "It was the way it was handled that was the disaster," says a former leadership aide. After a month of mostly good news for the GOP, and DeLay long gone, the storyline again was, "Republicans will do anything to hang on to power."

Hastert spokesman Ron Bonjean admits that "the Foley issue clearly brought [the 'corrupt Congress' narrative] back," but insists that his boss "forcefully responded." Others, however, maintain that Hastert had been distracted and tired for more than a year. To Bonjean, such analysis is typical Monday-morning quarterbacking: "Whenever there's a loss, fingers will get pointed and people will assign blame. It was a variety of factors that contributed to the loss."

He's right. Compounding the difficulties in Iraq and the fallout from the assorted cases of tawdriness, not much got done legislatively. There was no major immigration bill, no heavy lifting on entitlements or health care, no significant step to curb spending, no effort on tax reform, and nothing bold on energy independence. Nor was there any sort of ethics reform brought forward that could have offered some political cover. As Davis says, "It wasn't the failure on an ethics bill that hurt us; it was the failure to do anything at all."

Ultimately, it all goes back to Tom DeLay. House Republicans had become dependent on DeLay to muscle through the tough votes, keep the caucus in line with dollops of honey and vinegar, and generally ram their agenda down Democrats' throats. When he became dogged by various ethical questions, the GOP was left in a no-win situation. If he didn't go, he would become an albatross around the party's neck in November. But his departure "proved the stereotype true," as a House leadership aide puts it: Everyone knew who had been running the show all along. With DeLay gone, there was a leadership vacuum that nobody could fill.

Certainly not the big-hearted guy sitting across the Thanksgiving table. **NR**

The *Macaca* Campaign

How George Allen fell

RICHARD LOWRY

THE last thin hope of Republicans not losing the Senate as well as the House was broken two days after the election when Virginia senator George Allen conceded a 9,000-vote defeat to Democrat James Webb. It was the perfect whimper to accompany the death of the GOP congressional majority—a once highly touted potential presidential candidate vanquished after a humiliating campaign that ended with a brief, hopeless post-election search for additional votes.

In George W. Bush's annus horribilis, it is only appropriate that Allen too got "thumped." His fate was tied to Bush's—as went Bush and the war in Iraq, so to a significant degree went Allen. Like Bush, Allen was dogged by negative press coverage, was the focus of an onslaught by left-wing bloggers, and saw what once had been considered political strengths—in Bush's case resoluteness, in Allen's a good-ol'-boy bonhomie—turn into liabilities.

Allen shared other Republican troubles. When the year began, Republicans were supposed to turn the issue of the Iraq War against the "cut and run" Democrats, but by year's end *they* were the ones getting pounded on the issue. They were supposed to turn the election into a "choice instead of a referendum," focusing on the vulnerabilities of their opposition. But in key races Democrats fielded candidates difficult to pin with usual liberal liabilities, and these contests never became about anything other than the Republican incumbent.

But the Allen campaign was also—to borrow from Tolstoy—unhappy in its own way. To talk about the campaign with Allen supporters and insiders is to hear a steady stream of withering scorn about the campaign's failings. One of the most frequently repeated words is "101." As in, "It is unbelievable that they blew that—it was Damage Control 101," or "Press Relations 101," or "Campaigns 101."

What *wasn't* wrong with the Allen campaign? It was insufficiently prepared, whether from looking ahead to 2008, or out of incompetence. "We would have been hard pressed to hand you a printed-out copy of our campaign strategy, because it didn't exist," says one insider. It was poorly managed day to day, and the "solution" was to raise a lot of money and throw it into radio and TV ads, so the ground game was neglected.

Most Allen insiders blame the failings on Dick Wadhams, a well-regarded GOP operative who had been imported to groom Allen for president. Eventually, Wadhams was pushed aside amid internecine staff squabbles, so at times no one seemed to know who was running the campaign. But all of that may have been of minor consequence compared with the harm done by the candidate.

With Allen's loss, left-wing bloggers have to be counted one-for-two in high-profile Senate races this year. They couldn't bring down Joe Lieberman, but they bagged Allen. "I have never seen a campaign that was more driven by liberal bloggers," says an Allen strategist. In an environment in which shrewd and quick-footed media management is more necessary than ever, the Allen campaign repeatedly delivered the opposite.

The turning point, of course, was Allen's moment of YouTube stardom, when he referred to an Indian-American staffer from the Webb campaign following him with a video camera as "macaca." The video clip instantly became famous. Instead of putting the incident to bed quickly—with a crisp explanation and rapid apology—the Allen campaign bumbled through days of shifting explanations, followed by serial apologies from Allen. "It was a textbook example of how not to respond to a gaffe," says an insider.

Macaca sounds like a French word that is used derogatively of Africans. Why Allen said it is a mystery. Like Bush, Allen is fond of nicknames, and he maintains he simply invented the word. But it's possible it was rattling around in the recesses of his brain from hearing his French-Tunisian mom say it. Whatever

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Professor Daileader also emphasizes the importance of understanding the Early Middle Ages as a vital underpinning for what was to come.

St. Augustine

"Without some important transformations that occurred during this period, the rest would not have been possible. To understand fully the High Middle Ages or the Italian Renaissance, it is necessary to understand the Early Middle Ages," he says.

Dr. Philip Daileader is Associate Professor of History at The College of William and Mary. A graduate of The Johns Hopkins University, he received both his M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard University, where he was a four-time winner of the Certificate of Distinction in Teaching.

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the truth is, it is inconceivable that Allen intended it as a racial slur.

But the incident changed everything for Allen. His wearing of cowboy boots, his dipping, his fondness for NASCAR and country music, his love for riding horses—all had once said, "unpretentious, personable guy." After *macaca*, they all screamed, "dunderheaded bigot." "Some of the most charming aspects of George Allen became problems," says the insider. It is hard to recover from a gaffe that makes your entire political persona toxic.

The controversy directly led to yet another—allegations that Allen had used the N-word 30 years ago. The allegers said his bullying in the *macaca* incident reminded them of the Allen they had once known. Allen repeated categorical-seeming denials that only served to invite more people to come forward. Even Allen staffers think Webb responded more appropriately to N-word questions of his own when he coyly admitted that he had said the word before.

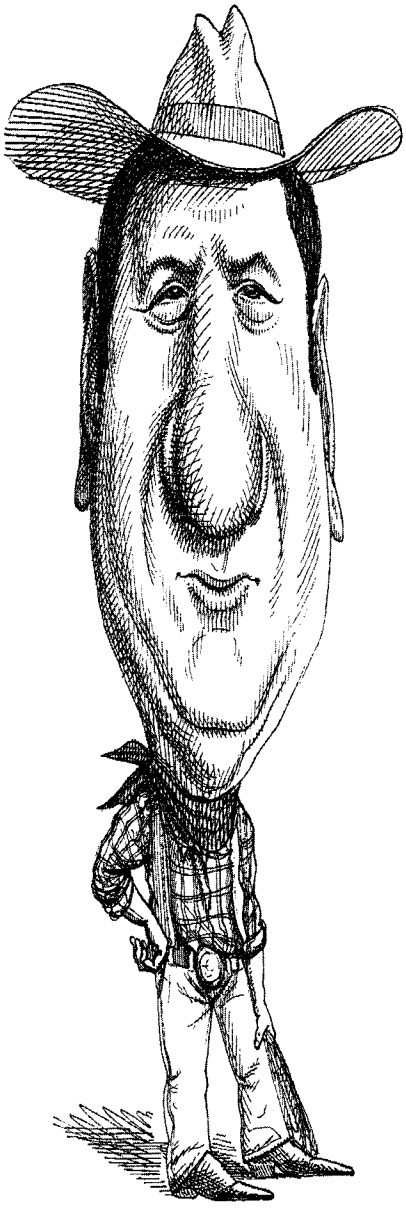
By this time, the entirety of Allen's honorable career as a congressman, governor, and senator had been wiped out by the all-important *Washington Post*. All that was left was his fondness for the Confederate flag as a teenager, his alleged use of the N-word, and *macaca*. Even the *Post*'s ombudsman twice acknowledged the paper's anti-Allen tilt. It was so bad that the paper's editors arguably should occupy the Virginia Senate seat instead of Webb, since they did more to defeat Allen.

Allen tried to remind voters of his accomplishments as governor. But his single term—Virginia governors can't serve consecutive terms—had ended in 1997 and was remote compared with his tenure in the Senate. Allen has an executive temperament and never enjoyed being in the Senate, where he didn't do much. His main accomplishment was a successful turn as chairman of the GOP senatorial committee in 2002. But that doesn't mean anything to Virginia voters. In retrospect, it might have been better for Allen to have run for governor again in 2001 instead of for Senate in 2000.

In any case, he had less margin for error than one might think. Virginia is a reliable Republican state in presidential elections, but otherwise it is more competitive. Democrats have won five of the last seven gubernatorial races, and Allen was hugely popular when he left as governor, but still won his Senate seat in 2000 by only four points.

Lots of new voters had moved into Virginia since Allen was governor and since his election to the Senate. Their introduction to Allen was *macaca*. These voters, especially those in Northern Virginia, were also much less inclined than traditional Virginians to be charmed by Allen's cowboy persona. "Northern Virginia is New Jersey," says a Republican strategist, who doesn't mean it as a compliment.

According to Larry Sabato, the University of Virginia political scientist, no one has won statewide in Virginia with as narrow a geographic base as Webb except Democrat Doug Wilder in his 1989 gubernatorial race. Webb won 22 cities out of 39, and 22 counties out of 93. But half of the cities and a fifth of the counties was enough to win. Wilder actually did better than Webb downstate. Webb merely matched Wilder's margins in Northern Virginia, but there are many more voters there now than 17 years ago.



ROMAN GENN

George Allen

In addition to all of this, Bush was a drag. Allen underperformed in Republican Hampton Roads where even veterans and members of the military were souring on the Iraq War. One Allen strategist says, "We never got above Bush's favorable ratio in key markets." The Allen camp maintains that on Oct. 18, Allen's polls showed him leading 52–42. The next day Bush appeared at an event with Allen, and the senator's lead immediately dropped to one point, 47–46. He never again got above 50.

It's hard to see how one not-particularly-high-profile Bush visit could have hurt so much. But there is no doubt that Allen—not a very persuasive defender of the war—did all he could to hug fellow Virginia senator John Warner, whose political standing was only enhanced when he came back from Iraq to pronounce progress there inadequate and call for a new approach. Whatever benefit Allen might have gotten from his association with Warner was overwhelmed, however, by Democratic ads attacking the Bush "stay the course" strategy.

And so Allen lost and all the same Beltway insiders who touted him as a presidential candidate said they had never been impressed with him. This isn't fair, but such is politics. "Sometimes good people lose campaigns," Allen strategist Ed Gillespie says of the senator.

In the end, there was an element of psychodrama to the Allen campaign. The senator had repeated a pattern from his football-coach father. The senior Allen would initially win in the new town he arrived in, and become a kind of folk hero. Then, he would wear out his welcome—partly through avoidable mistakes—and lose his job in ignominy. Coach Allen usually had a second act. With time, his son might have one too. **NR**

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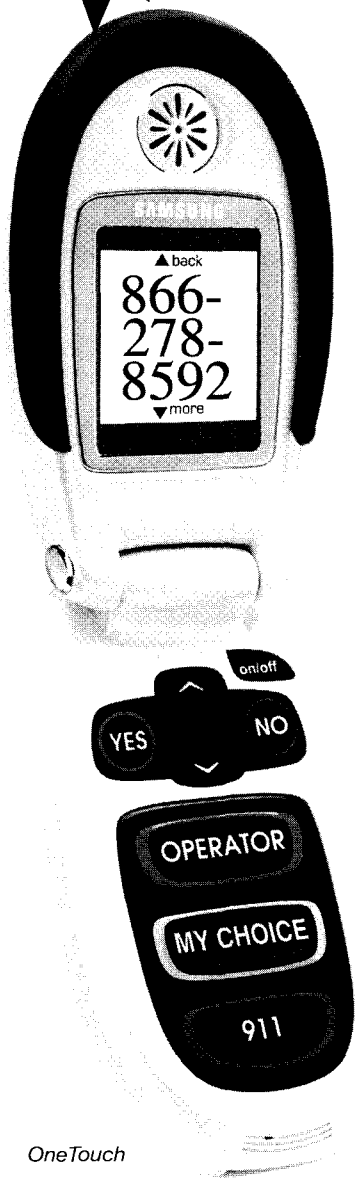

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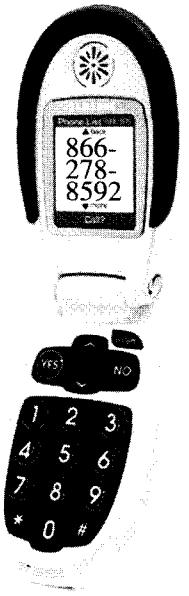

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The Color Purple

How liberal millionaires are buying Colorado's politics

JOHN J. MILLER

When Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave votes on abortion, she votes pro-life—always. The National Right to Life Committee has given the Colorado Republican a top rating during her two terms in the House, and in truth her pro-life record stretches back even farther, to her days in the state legislature. "I'm 100 percent pro-life," she says.

So it came as a bit of a surprise when a group calling itself Coloradans for Life launched an expensive ad war against Musgrave this fall. One radio spot even claimed that she had "turned her back on the unborn." The charge was provocative; it was also utter nonsense. "This is a cynical political ploy to trick pro-life citizens into casting a vote against their conscience," warned Colorado Right to Life president Brian Rohrbough in a statement.

Despite its name and rhetoric, Coloradans for Life sought to exploit the pro-life movement rather than advance it. Although several Republicans faced challenges this year from at least nominally pro-life Democrats, Musgrave did not: Her opponent, Angie Paccione, supports abortion rights. Yet Coloradans for Life targeted Musgrave and spent enormous sums against her. In late October, the *Fort Collins Coloradoan* estimated that the organization would devote at least $2.3 million to defeating Musgrave—more than Paccione's entire campaign budget. "It's just amazing to me," says Musgrave. "Why can't these people stand up and fight fair?"

On Election Day, Musgrave overcame the wave that drowned so many of her colleagues and cost the GOP its majority: She nipped Paccione by 3.5 points. Many of her fellow Colorado Republicans weren't so lucky. For the second election in a row, Democrats made major gains in the state: They won the governorship, prevailed in a GOP-held congressional district, and picked up seats in the state legislature.

National trends certainly had something to do with it. At the heart of this accomplishment, however, lies a well-funded plot to transform Colorado from Republican red to Democratic blue. The creative use of extra-party organizations such as Coloradans for Life to shade the state purple is a strategy that the Left may decide to imitate elsewhere.

Just four years ago, Republicans were riding high in the Rockies: Gov. Bill Owens was reelected by a huge margin, both senators were Republican, and so were five of the seven members of Colorado's House delegation. The GOP also controlled the state legislature.

Today, the situation is rather different. Not only is Colorado's governor-elect Bill Ritter a Democrat, but so are one of its senators (Ken Salazar) and four of its seven incoming House members. Democrats also hold majorities in both chambers of the state legislature. "They're on a roll," says John Andrews, the former Republican head of the state senate.

There are plenty of explanations for this sea change. Demography is one of them: A growing Hispanic population leans Democratic, and a small wave of Californians has moved into Colorado and imported the west coast's liberal politics.

Some will describe Colorado's political reversal as the result of Western libertarians' rejecting social conservatism. Yet that interpretation has its limits. This November, voters approved a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage and rejected a referendum that would have created domestic partnerships for gays.

Many conservatives blame the GOP's woes on its complacency. "Republicans are getting the comeuppance they deserve," says Jon Caldara of the Independence Institute, a think tank based in Golden, Colo. When Republicans controlled the state government, they made progress in several areas—tax cuts, charter schools, public-school accountability—but they also presided over the weakening of an amendment to the state constitution that had checked the growth of government.

A large number of Republicans believe that their hard times ultimately come down to a single factor: money. "We haven't seen anything like this before," says Katy Atkinson, a longtime GOP consultant. "The money factor is absolutely enormous." The problem began in 2002, when the voters approved a new campaign-finance law that gave unions a big edge in raising and distributing funds. It continued two years later, as wealthy liberals poured resources into "527" groups, unregulated campaign organizations named after a section of the tax code.

Only Florida and Ohio saw more 527 spending in 2004 than Colorado did, according to one estimate. The *Rocky Mountain News* calculated that Democrats raised $4 million for friendly 527s, compared with $2.9 million raised by Republicans, but GOP operatives believe the difference was much larger. "We think that they outspent us by three to one or four to one," says Alan Philp of the Trailhead Group, a Republican 527 that was created to fight back. "It's hard to know for sure because the law doesn't require much transparency." The only certainty is that Colorado's political mechanics are totally different from just a few years ago.

Three millionaire liberals are working the state's electoral levers. "They're trying to buy the political structure of the state," says Governor Owens. "Everywhere we look, we see their money and their resources." The ringleader is Tim Gill, the founder of Quark, a software firm; over the last decade, he has donated tens of millions to gay and lesbian causes.

His political activism dates back to 1992, when Colorado voters amended the state constitution to restrict certain gay-rights laws. "Nothing can compare to the psychological trauma of realizing that more than half the people in your state believe that you don't deserve equal rights," he once told the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*. Gill's allies are heiress Pat Stryker and dotcom entrepreneur Jared Polis. "If you were to put a gun to the head of most Democrats, they couldn't tell you who their state chairman is," says one Colorado insider. "But they all know about these millionaires—each is like a mini–George Soros for Colorado."

Two years ago, Ray Martinez learned firsthand what their money can do. He

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was a former police sergeant and a popular three-term mayor of Fort Collins. When a state senator retired in his district, he threw his hat in the ring. "We thought he would win easily," says Owens. The district is home to about one-third more registered Republicans than Democrats. But then Colorado's liberal millionaires swooped in, bankrolling slash-and-burn ads about Martinez. Many of them aired in Denver's pricey TV market—an extravagance previously unheard of in state-senate races. "You know how you hear about elections that are bought? That's what happened to me—my opponent's election was bought," says Martinez. "My campaign cost about $350,000, and the other side spent as much as $1.7 million against me."

One commercial accused Martinez of bilking taxpayers through his mayoral expense account. Another savaged his views on abortion, with images suggesting that he likes to peek into bedroom windows. "That was such character assassination," he says. "I'm pro-life. I was raised in an orphanage, adopted, and only recently did I discover that my birth mother was a rape victim and that I've got brothers and sisters. And they're trying to portray me as a perverted Peeping Tom." At one point during the race, Martinez enjoyed a double-digit lead in the polls. This soon vanished, and he lost. "Their lies worked," he says.

This year, state representative Matt Knoedler, a Republican, came in for similar treatment when he challenged Democratic state senator Betty Boyd. Their race was billed as one of the most important in Colorado: "Control of the chamber probably hinges on the matchup," wrote the *Denver Post*.

A 527 called Clear Peak Colorado—funded by six-figure donations from Gill and Stryker—came out swinging, in ads that accused Knoedler of weakness on immigration. "This is a complete lie," complained Knoedler on his website. His supposed sin was to oppose a watered-down version of a bill to prevent illegal aliens from receiving certain public services. In fact, he backed a tougher version; he had also served on the staff of Congressman Tom Tancredo, a prominent supporter of immigration restriction. But the ad worked, and Knoedler lost the election by nearly 13 points.

The mini-Soroses of Colorado aren't merely dabbling in elections—they're building a permanent infrastructure. "We are finally realizing that how we win is by creating an environment of fear and respect," boasted Gill adviser Ted Trimpa—described by one politico as "the Karl Rove of Colorado"—to the *Bay Area Reporter*, a gay newspaper in San Francisco, earlier this year.

They've established several websites, including ColoradoPols.com, that have started to shape political coverage in the state. "I can't tell you how often reporters would call 36 hours after something appeared there," says Owens. They've also founded Colorado Media Matters, an offshoot of David Brock's national group of left-wing watchdogs. It currently employs about a dozen people. "That's more media critics than there are in the rest of the Colorado media combined," says David Kopel of the Independence Institute. Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, a liberal group that tries to publicize GOP scandals both real and fake, has a Colorado field office as well. Gill would even like to influence the GOP: He hired former Owens staffer and conservative-movement veteran Sean Duffy to work on the domestic-partnership referendum, and convinced Patrick Guerriero to resign as head of the Log Cabin Republicans in order to run the Gill Action Fund.

Given their incredible success over the last two election cycles, Colorado's liberals are no doubt already looking forward to 2008. GOP senator Wayne Allard may retire. Even if he doesn't, the battle for his seat will be one of the hardest-fought Senate contests in the country. Denver is a leading candidate to host the Democratic convention that year, and there will be a major push to deliver Colorado's electoral votes to the party's nominee.

Potentially more important is Gill's determination to export the Colorado model. "If I can make a difference in Colorado, you can make a difference in your home state," he said earlier this year in Miami, at a meeting of financial heavyweights in the gay-rights movement, according to the *Rocky Mountain News*. To liberals, that may sound like a hope. Conservatives should hear it as a threat. **NR**

So Goes The Nation

You can't build a national party on post-nationalism

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

More was lost on November 7 than an election. The project of making the GOP a truly national majority party also evaporated. And it did so despite the fact that a Republican president was given an unparalleled opportunity by 9/11 to build such a party on the foundations of a new, inclusive patriotism.

Elections come around regularly. You win some, you lose some. But natural majority parties win more elections than they lose. And they continue to exert an influence on policy even when they are out of office. America was governed by liberal ideas during the long dominance of the FDR coalition, even in the brief periods when the Republicans won power. Clinton governed in a much more conservative fashion than he had intended—like "Eisenhower Republicans," he famously complained—because he governed in the shadow of Reagan and under the constraints of Reaganism.

But when Bush 43 was inaugurated in January 2001, America had no natural majority party. It was a nation split almost down the middle—actually, leaning slightly leftwards if we take Ralph Nader's vote into account—and potentially open to conversion by either major party. Karl Rove's response in 2000 (and, as events turned out, in 2004 as well) was to seek a narrow political victory by focusing on every identity and interest group sympathetic to the GOP and ensuring that they turned out to vote. That incremental approach can win an election, but it cannot build a long-term majority party. What typically creates a new national majority is a massive real-world event—the 1930s Depression, the Vietnam debacle—on which one party reflects strong public sentiment more powerfully than the other.

September 11 was just such an event.

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THE BLUE RIBBON REPORT RICHARD NIXON CHOSE TO BURY

After Richard Nixon flattened the Democrats as soft on crime in the '68 election, the President-elect faced a dilemma. There's not much the White House can do to impact crime. The thugs people are afraid of — burglars, robbers, rapists, murderers — are the business of state courts. Then somebody mentioned drugs.[1]*

In a textbook example of fear manipulation, Nixon warned the country that a plague of unimaginable proportions was about to engulf the nation. "The problem has assumed the dimensions of a national emergency," he said.[2] To fight the pushers on their own terms, he would need emergency powers — preventive detention, unorthodox strike forces, more freedom to search, wire tap, and arrest.

For scientific support, he appointed former Republican Pennsylvania Governor Ray Shafer to head a National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse. He told Gov. Shafer to treat marijuana just like heroin despite the "obvious differences between marijuana and other drugs."[3] He was even more direct with chief of staff Bob Haldeman. "I want a Goddamn strong statement about marijuana...that just tears the ass out of them."[4]

But after months of testimony from academics, medical experts, lawmen and health professionals, the facts overwhelmed the myths. The report was devastating: "Marijuana use, in and of itself, is neither causative of, nor directly associated with crime..."[5] It found no basis for the gateway theory. Alcohol, it said, was probably a greater danger, and the report concluded that personal use of marijuana should no longer be a crime.[6]

The President hit the roof. He complained to Haldeman, "...every one of the bastards that are out for legalizing marijuana is Jewish."[7]

In the face of the shooting war in Vietnam the Shafer Commission was quickly forgotten but the consequences of that cover-up are with us still. Since the 1972 release of that official report recommending legalization, we have arrested more than 14 million Americans[8] at a cost of over $100 billion[9] and the use of marijuana is undiminished.[10]

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www.CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org www.DrugWarFacts.org
www.ManagingChronicPain.org www.MedicalMJ.org
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* Visit http://www.csdp.org/publicservice/nixon06notes.htm for citations, including full text of the Shafer Report

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Though there was a united bipartisan patriotic response to the attack, the GOP was better placed to gain politically from it than the Democrats. It is the natural party of patriotism and national defense just as the Democrats are the natural party of compassion and the welfare state. Both parties duly tried to exploit 9/11 politically in their own ways: Democrats argued that the bravery of police and firemen had shown the value of government, Republicans that the attack showed the need for a strong defense. This struggle to interpret 9/11 was initially won by the Republicans. The Democrats found themselves endorsing the Afghan and Iraq Wars—which, as their subsequent behavior has shown, they viscerally disliked.

But the reactions of both to 9/11, while important as policy, were culturally superficial. Neither really grasped that 9/11 might have significantly changed our ideas of American nationhood. The upsurge of patriotism on the part of ordinary Americans was uncomplicatedly nationalist. Its slogan was "United We Stand" and it expressed the "melting-pot" theory of American unity rooted in assimilation. This coexisted uneasily alongside a more recent theory of American nationhood: the official multiculturalism of the media, cultural, and political elites who were suspicious of assimilation as nativist. Their virtual slogan was "Why do they hate us?" One theory or the other would eventually prevail. And whether it was patriotism or multiculturalism would determine inter alia the next majority party.

The Democrats were the party of multiculturalism. If the mood of patriotism were allowed to dissipate, the Democrats would benefit by default from the balkanizing effects of a revived multiculturalism. If, however, Bush and the Republicans could shape the inchoate mood of outraged patriotism into a substantial practical politics of American unity, they could well build a permanent new majority around this vision.

At the time several commentators—including Kate O'Beirne and myself in NR—pointed out that this great opportunity was being ignored. Our analyses were largely general, however, and lacked the kind of practical ideas on implementing a new policy that political parties want. As it happens, just such advice was being given, then and later, to the White House in a series of memos from scholars in a Washington think tank.

Their argument was that in the post-9/11 climate "it should be possible to mount an initiative that changes the terms of debate on such issues as multiculturalism, the teaching of American history and civics, and the general question of American exceptionalism. Animated by generosity of spirit and without a trace of racism or xenophobia, such an initiative would have broad bi-partisan appeal and could lead to permanent cultural/political realignments."

Their memos went on to lay out practical proposals to revive, strengthen, and entrench patriotic American unity. They argued that Veterans Day should be transformed into a celebration of the "greatest generation," who fought and won World War II—and that the Washington celebration could then be used as a teaching device in America's schools. They proposed a presidential commission, perhaps headed by Rudy Giuliani, to develop ideas for implementing "assimilative patriotism" (an idea championed by such figures as Teddy Roosevelt) throughout American life. They advocated a "Citizenship Agency" that would teach the obligations of citizens (rather than simply dispense "services" to immigrants) as part of a wider program of celebrating citizenship. And they urged that the president regularly preside over the swearing-in of new citizens in public ceremonies "that should be dignified, inspiring, and foster patriotism."

In making such proposals, they avoided obvious pitfalls. The program was carefully bipartisan. Even though the administration would have political motives for pushing the program, its main purpose would be to shape an inclusive patriotism open to all. It would seek to convert Democratic-leaning constituencies to an unhyphenated American identity rather than to exclude them. Thus, the celebration of the "greatest generation" would have been focused on Sen. George McGovern as well as on Sen. Robert Dole. The think-tankers also neatly finessed the internal GOP dispute over immigration—essentially ignoring illegal immigrants and focusing on the historical success of assimilation. In particular, their program of "patriotic assimilation" would be avowedly directed toward those immigrants who had followed the law in their path to citizenship. Finally, as well as assimilating new immigrants into American life, they sought to remind native-born Americans of the benefits of being an American. They explicitly invoked the example of FDR in advocating this program. They thus sought to join new legal immigrants and the native-born in an updated, unified American patriotism—and they hoped Bush would imitate FDR's success in making his party the vanguard and vessel of this American unity.

The memos seem to have been ignored by the White House. A few meetings were held to discuss these ideas, but neither specific proposals nor a policy embodying their broad insights ever emerged. Doubtless one reason is the nature of modern government. The White House is a bureaucratic maze; time is short; good ideas get lost at the bottom of briefcases.

But the more important reason is probably that President Bush himself seems to be a not-very-covert multiculturalist. His administration moved in exactly the opposite direction to the advice tendered. Its budgets massively increased spending on bilingual education. He gave no support to the various referendum initiatives on making English the official language. He signaled to the U.S. Supreme Court that he favored the continuation of racial preferences. And he favors an immigration policy that is hard to distinguish from "open borders."

One result of these policies is that he threw away the chance to create a new inclusive American patriotism—and with it a new majority status for the GOP.

Not all conservatives will object to this failure. Many libertarians (alerted by the non-hostile reference to FDR) will feel that this government-encouraged patriotism is something best avoided—indeed, that it is "statist." As James C. Bennett reminds us in *The Anglosphere Challenge*, however, modern states tend to be of two kinds: those held together by a common culture, and those held together by government transfer payments. When George Bush chose multiculturalism, he also opted for massive government spending.

As the election result showed, however, as well as being the party of multiculturalism, the Democrats are the party of transfer payments. And they're better at both. **NR**

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The Word on Immigration

Voters didn't say yes to amnesty.

MARK KRIKORIAN

THE 2006 election has already had pernicious consequences. One of them is the emergence of the view—eagerly peddled by open-borders advocates—that congressional Republicans' commitment to immigration enforcement was a central reason for their defeat. A corollary is that the election results are clear evidence of the public's support for legalization of illegal aliens ("amnesty" to you and me) plus huge increases in future immigration.

These claims are absurd—the result of either disingenuousness or credulous wishful thinking. It became clear even before the election that Republicans were going to get thumped because of scandals and Iraq, so the open-borders crowd got started early in trying to shape public perceptions. In a *Foreign Affairs* article before the vote, indefatigable amnesty promoter Tamar Jacoby, from the Manhattan Institute, eagerly anticipated a Republican defeat: "The political stars will realign, perhaps sooner than anyone expects, and when they do, Congress will return to the task it has been wrestling with: how to translate the emerging consensus into legislation to repair the nation's broken immigration system." (This consensus has been "emerging" for years now, like the joke says about Brazil—it's the country of the future, and always will be.)

Writing in *Newsweek*, Fareed Zakaria demonstrated that he shared Jacoby's cluelessness about Flyover Land: "The great obstacle to immigration reform has been a noisy minority. . . . Come Tuesday, the party will be over. CNN's Lou Dobbs and his angry band of xenophobes will continue to rail, but a new

Mr. Krikorian is executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies.

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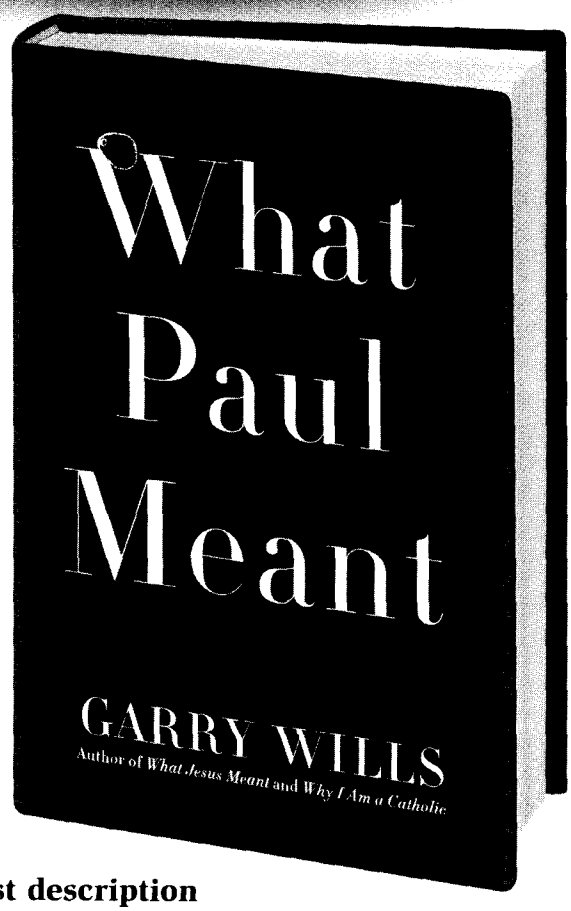

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Congress, with fewer Republicans and no impending primary elections, would make the climate much less vulnerable to the tyranny of the minority."

After the results were in, the spinning continued. Jacoby, in *The Weekly Standard*, denounced "far-right" groups motivated by "xenophobia" and those who engaged in "demagoguery" over this "wedge issue." But even she wasn't so detached from reality as to claim a mandate for amnesty, acclaiming the election instead as "opening the political space for better, more pragmatic policy."

Most of her confederates haven't been so circumspect. From Linda Chavez and Fred Barnes to the editorial pages of the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Los Angeles Times*, the conclusion of the smart set is that the public has voted for an amnesty for illegal aliens. In Chavez's words, "Now that the people have spoken, maybe Congress will finally listen and pass comprehensive immigration reform."

Apparently, the pro-amnesty side has started believing the results from the hilariously skewed polling on this subject—which often employs such pro-amnesty code words as "comprehensive reform" and "earned legalization," and offers respondents only the Hobson's choice of mass deportations or amnesty. The most recent example of this genre was the exit poll that asked: "Should most illegal immigrants working in the United States be: 1. Offered a chance to apply for legal status 2. Deported to the country they came from." With only these two options, the results were 57–38 in favor of amnesty.

More responsible polling finds something very different. A pre-election survey by the polling company (that's their name; the poll was sponsored by the Center for Immigration Studies) used neutral language and offered all *three* choices of what to do about the existing illegal population, namely: legalization (a policy "that allows illegal immigrants to stay and earn their way to permanent residence and citizenship"), deportation (a "large scale effort to round up and deport illegal immigrants"), or finally, the House Republicans' approach ("a policy that strictly enforces immigration laws and causes illegal immigrants to go home over time"). When presented with the full range of choices, the House approach, sometimes called "attrition through enforcement," won out with 44 percent, while 20 percent wanted deportations, and 31 percent preferred amnesty. So there is definitely a certain level of support for amnesty (we found about the same level in a May poll conducted by Zogby), but the public still prefers enforcement by two to one.

The election results do nothing to contradict these findings. Using the grading system of Americans for Better Immigration, a pro-control lobbying group, we find that about 10 percent of Republicans with an "A" grade lost, while 25 percent of those with an F grade lost. Looking at Rep. Tom Tancredo's pro-enforcement Immigration Reform Caucus, we see that about 7 percent of Caucus members lost, compared with more than 11 percent of all Republicans. The pro-enforcement slant of these results may just be a matter of circumstance, but it certainly doesn't point to any repudiation of a strong stance on immigration.

If legalizing illegals is so widely supported by the electorate, how come no Democrats campaigned on it?

The anti-Republican wave did overwhelm some enforcement supporters, like John Hostettler (with an immigration-control grade of A-) and Charles Taylor (A), but also amnesty promoters like Mike DeWine (D) and Lincoln Chafee (F). Likewise, the winners included both prominent hawks—Tancredo (A) and Brian Bilbray (A+)—and doves—Richard Lugar (D-).

Among those vying for open seats, Rick O'Donnell in Colorado ran in part on a tough immigration platform and lost, while Peter Roskam in Illinois had a similarly tough approach and won.

The claim for a pro-amnesty mandate rests chiefly on the defeat of two restrictionist House candidates in Arizona, J. D. Hayworth and Randy Graf. The L. A. *Times* opined that by not electing these two men, "the voters of Arizona have pushed a comprehensive solution one step closer to reality."

The defeat of these two somewhat strident voices may well suggest that a monomaniacal focus on illegal immigration, to the exclusion of all else, cannot compensate for other disadvantages, especially in the face of the national trend against Republicans. But at the same time they were voting for the Democrats in these races (both of whom took pains to sound tough on enforcement), Arizona voters also approved four tough immigration-related ballot measures by huge margins. The measures, all approved by about three to one, will deny bail to illegal aliens, bar illegals from winning punitive damages, bar illegals from receiving state subsidies for education and child care, and declare English the state's official language. The people have spoken, indeed.

Something similar happened in Colorado. Bob Beauprez's loss in the gubernatorial race has been portrayed as a defeat for the immigration hawks, but voters also approved two pro-

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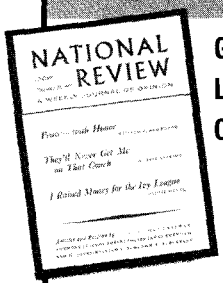

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enforcement ballot measures, one to deny state-income-tax deductibility for wages paid to illegals, the other to instruct the state's attorney general to sue the federal government to demand enforcement of the immigration laws.

What's more, if legalizing illegals is so widely supported by the electorate, how come no Democrats campaigned on it? On the contrary, the immigration positions of a number of successful Democratic challengers might as well have been written by Tom Tancredo, including those of Brad Ellsworth (the Indiana sheriff who defeated House Immigration Subcommittee chairman John Hostettler), Missouri Senate winner Claire McCaskill, Montana Senate winner Jon Tester, or Congressman-elect Jason Altmire of Pennsylvania.

Even those Democrats nominally committed to "comprehensive" reform stressed enforcement as job one. And neither the national party's "Six for '06" agenda nor the plan for the "first 100 hours" says a word about immigration reform, "comprehensive" or otherwise.

The only exception to the Democrats' "whatever you do, don't talk about the amnesty" approach seems to have been Jim Pederson, who challenged Sen. Jon Kyl (an immigration grade of B) by touting a Bush-McCain-Kennedy-style amnesty and foreign-worker program and even praised the 1986 amnesty, which pretty much everyone now agrees was a catastrophe. He lost.

The last element of the pro-amnesty myth is that the immigration hawks alienated Hispanic voters. The Republican share of that vote did fall, from 38 percent in the last midterm election to 30 percent this time. But, as journalist Steve Sailer points out, the Hispanic vote simply follows the white vote, only more Democratic, and the Republican share of the white vote also fell, from 58 percent in 2002 to 51 percent in 2006.

In sum, the elections showed what everyone should have known: Support for immigration control is not a silver bullet and isn't enough to counteract public dissatisfaction with Republicans over the scandals and Iraq. But if Democratic leaders buy into the myth of an amnesty mandate, they'll be in for a big surprise come 2008. **NR**

The Battle of Hastings

Should the impeached judge head the House Intel Committee?

BYRON YORK

In the summer of 1988, the House of Representatives considered articles of impeachment against Alcee Hastings, a federal judge in Florida accused of conspiring to take bribes. It was only the tenth time in U.S. history that a judge had faced impeachment, and Michigan Democratic congressman John Conyers took to the floor to suggest that some of the allegations against Hastings, the first black to serve on the federal bench in Florida, might be racially motivated. Nevertheless, Conyers said, the case had to be judged on its merits, and on those merits—as chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Justice that investigated the matter, he knew the case backward and forward—he had decided to vote for impeachment.

In his speech, Conyers harked back to civil-rights days, when corrupt judges sometimes twisted and ignored the law. "We did not wage that civil-rights struggle merely to replace one form of judicial corruption with another," Conyers told his fellow lawmakers. "The principle of equality requires that a black public official be held to the same standard that other public officials are held to. Just as race should never disqualify a person from office, race should never insulate a person from the consequences of wrongful conduct."

Conyers's argument prevailed: On August 3, 1988, Hastings was impeached by a vote of 413 to 3. And Conyers, a cosponsor of the impeachment resolution, went on to serve as one of the House managers who argued for impeachment in Hastings's Senate trial. There, on October 20, 1989, Hastings was convicted and removed from the bench.

One might expect such a verdict to end a career, but Hastings was more resilient than that. In 1992, he rebounded from his impeachment to win election to Congress from the 23rd district of Florida. (The terms of his conviction didn't bar him from holding future public office.) Hastings has served in the House ever since, and has accumulated a good deal of seniority.

His troubles in the 1980s would be ancient history but for the fact that Democrats won control of the House on November 7. As a result, Hastings is now in line to become the next chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. (By rights, that spot should go to Rep. Jane Harman, but a feud with speaker Nancy Pelosi has bumped her out of the running.) Now Pelosi has to decide whether a man who was impeached for bribery and convicted in the Senate is qualified for one of the most sensitive posts in Congress. Before she makes her decision, Pelosi will undoubtedly give Hastings's case a close look. When she does, here's what she'll find:

Hastings was a prominent South Florida attorney when he was appointed to the federal bench in 1979 by Jimmy Carter. His problems began in 1981 with the case of two brothers, Frank and Thomas Romano, who had been accused of stealing $1 million from a union pension fund. The men were tried and convicted in Hastings's court. While they were awaiting sentencing, a man named William Dredge—a longtime criminal who at the time was facing drug charges—got in touch with the FBI and said that Hastings had solicited a bribe in an ongoing criminal case.

Dredge said that a close friend of Hastings, a D.C. lawyer named William Borders, was the go-between: Borders's job was to collect the bribe money and pass it on to Hastings. In addition, Dredge said that Borders was interested in soliciting a bribe for Hastings from the Romano brothers. He said that Borders had asked him, Dredge, to see if the brothers were interested in paying Hastings $150,000 in exchange for no jail time and having their ill-gotten gains, which had been confiscated, returned to them.

After interviewing Dredge several times, the FBI designed a sting operation. An agent posing as Frank Romano approached Borders to say that yes, the Romanos were interested in paying off Hastings in return for light treatment. Borders said it could be done. The under-

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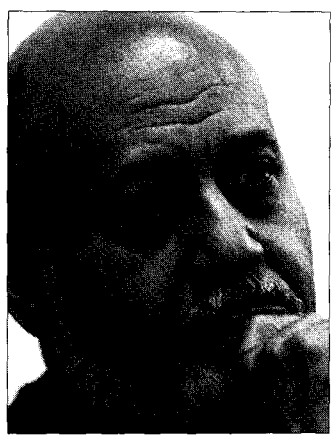
cover agent then indicated that he wanted to go ahead with the deal but had some questions: How do I know you really speak for Hastings? Can you arrange some sort of sign to show that Hastings is on board?

Sure, Borders said—how about I have Hastings show up at a time and place of your choosing? That will show that we're working together. Borders and the FBI agent posing as Romano agreed that Hastings could give the signal by coming to the dining room of the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami at 8 P.M. on September 16, 1981. If he did—all he had to do was show up—then everyone would know he was part of the deal.

When the time came, FBI agents had the hotel under surveillance. And, sure enough, Hastings showed up for dinner at 8. (The FBI did extensive investigation to determine whether Hastings might have gone to the Fontainebleau by chance, or whether Borders, who on that night was in Las Vegas watching a prizefight, might have tricked Hastings into it. They found nothing to support either theory.) The signal was sent; Hastings was on board.



Alcee Hastings

A deal was struck. In a meeting at the Miami Airport, the FBI agent gave Borders $25,000 as a down payment. In return, Hastings was to throw out the forfeiture judgment against the Romanos. After that, the remaining $125,000 would be paid.

Hastings did indeed throw out the judgment. A short time later, a pickup date for the full payoff was set. On October 9, 1981, while in Washington to be honored by the National Bar Association (the nation's largest black legal group), Borders got a call to meet "Frank" at a local hotel. Borders showed up and met with the FBI agent he thought was Frank Romano. The agent had brought the $125,000. When the money changed hands, Borders was immediately arrested.

Hastings was also in Washington that day to attend the dinner honoring his friend Borders. When he heard that Borders had been nabbed, and that the FBI wanted to talk to him, Hastings quickly changed his plans. He left his hotel without even waiting to check out. Instead of going to National Airport in Washington, a short drive from his hotel, Hastings took a long, expensive cab ride to Baltimore/Washington Airport. Once there, he called his girlfriend in Florida from a pay phone and arranged for her to call him back at another pay phone. Then he caught a plane south. The FBI found him late that night at his girlfriend's house.

Hastings was indicted in December 1981, charged with conspiring with Borders to solicit a bribe from the Romanos. Borders was also indicted. At trial, Hastings pleaded not guilty and claimed Borders was lying about the whole thing. He also claimed the prosecution was racially motivated. He was acquitted; Borders was convicted.

The verdict was too much for the judges on the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Florida. They hired John Doar, the legendary Kennedy Justice Department lawyer, to investigate. Doar came back with an extensive report suggesting that Hastings was not only guilty in the bribery case but had also lied repeatedly under oath at his trial. The report led two Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee to advocate impeachment proceedings. The Democratic majority agreed, and Conyers was placed in charge of the subcommittee investigation. While Conyers was extraordinarily protective of Hastings's rights, he also became convinced that Hastings was guilty. Impeachment and Senate conviction followed.

Hastings has always maintained his innocence. But the record is what it is, and it's fair to say that most people who have studied the case believe Hastings was guilty. Now, of course, the question is, Should a man who was found guilty of impeachable offenses be entrusted with the nation's most sensitive intelligence secrets? It's a question Nancy Pelosi would undoubtedly prefer not to answer. But it's not going away. **NR**

RICARDO WAYSON/UPI

Make It Mean Something

The least Republicans can do is lose for the right reason

ROB LONG

FIRST, the sour grapes: Remember the glum little pouts on the faces of the network anchors twelve years ago, when it was the Republicans sweeping the map? Remember Peter Jennings's bitchy little aside—that the voters who elected a Republican majority were like infants having a "temper tantrum"? Remember the stricken, blood-drained faces of the liberal Conventional Wisdom crowd—your Judy Woodruffs, your Howard Finemans—as the returns came in, and the speed with which the phrases "extreme right wing" and "radical conservative" and "the Gingrich who stole Christmas" splashed their way into headlines across the country?

Boy, things have changed, haven't they? On Election Night, as the columns starting stacking up in the "D" section of the onscreen grid, the mood at CNN, MSNBC, ABC, NBC, and CBS was so tastefully jubilant, so infectiously optimistic, that even I felt like celebrating. I opened an expensive bottle of champagne, poured a glass, raised a toast to Speaker Pelosi (*Historic! A woman!*), brought the glass to my lips, and was about to take a sip when suddenly I thought, "What are you so happy about? Your team lost." And so I put the glass down.

But I picked it back up again, to celebrate what was perhaps the clearest, cleanest example of left-wing media cocooning in recent memory. It was 1994, only backwards. Well, forwards, according to them. Still, it's enormously comforting for right-wing paranoids like me to reconfirm, every now and then, that yes, everyone is indeed against you, and yes, the media loves them their Democrats. "Wolf Blitzer," I said to the screen, as Wolf & Co. were desperately trying to work the baffling onscreen graphic, "I toast you!"

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Sour grapes portion now officially closed. Let's move on.

Wait. One more thing. Pelosi showing up at the Capitol the next day greeted by *kids*? Because, you know, that's what this election was all about, my friends—the *children*. I almost lost my lunch.

Okay, seriously now. No more sour grapes.

The good news is, there's something for everyone in this defeat. The libertarians among us can point accurately to certain squeaky-tight Senate races—Montana, especially—where the Libertarian-party candidate did quite well, stealing crucial votes from the Republican. Wet, northeast types can point to a total collapse of the Republican party in New England as a sign that fiscally pure Yankees no longer feel connected to the party. Social conservatives can highlight states like Ohio, where a lot of social conservatives just didn't vote, or the Senate race in Virginia, where a lot of them voted for the Democrat. And of course we lost the independents, who tend to decide these things.

When the people speak, they tend to speak all at once, and loudly, which makes it hard to figure out what they're saying. There's a kernel of truth in every one of the current explanations of what went wrong on Election Day—so many meanings are buried in the numbers that the loss is, essentially, meaningless.

That's bad news. In fact, that's the worst news possible. A meaningful defeat is never as good as a meaningful victory, of course, but both bring a useful clarity. It would be luxurious to be able to crunch a few numbers and confidently pronounce that what the party needs to do is move right, or left, or up, or something. But we don't have that luxury. What we have is a party that spent the past twelve years getting sloppy and fuzzy and vague about itself, and was rewarded with a drubbing. So the first order of business for the Republicans isn't to start winning. It's to start losing for the right reasons.

To put it another way, with another example, one of the big problems with the Kerry campaign in 2004 wasn't that he was too liberal, it was that he wasn't liberal enough. I know, I know. But still: There are a lot of votes floating around out there, and a lot of them are pretty left-wing—Kerry, for all of his creepy flaws, got an awful lot of people to punch his card. How many might he have gotten if he had bothered to stand for something? How might he, and how might the Republicans this year, have fared if, to use the words of the consumer-product industry, they had "branded themselves in the marketplace?"

The old adage "You can't beat something with nothing" is still true enough, but an interesting corollary is "You can't beat something with a lot of little somethings, either." For the past eight years, the Republican strategy has been to pepper the battlefield with a lot of mini-incursions—get some religious-Right action with the Terri Schiavo thing; get some pro-business support with the dividend-tax cut; go after the security moms on the terrorism deal; peel off some of the elderly with free drugs. And the result has been a series of—let's be totally honest here—nail-biting, hair-raising, razor-thin wins, elections decided in courthouses or by single-state margins and celebrated, foolishly, as slam-dunk mandates that vindicated the piecemeal, jigsaw master plan.

A party that spent the past twelve years getting sloppy and fuzzy and vague about itself was rewarded with a drubbing.

I have a friend who played basketball in high school on the worst team in the area. It was a small, rural high school—and to get on the team, you basically had to show up in shorts and high tops. During one terrible game, when the team was spazzing all over the court, the furious, frustrated coach called a timeout, gathered the team, and told them just to dribble and pass the ball downcourt a bit, then, whoever had it, just put it down on the ground and run away. Just see if you can do that, he said. Let's just see if you guys can do anything, any *one* thing right. Anything basic.

Not a bad idea, really. Put it down and run away. The worst that happens is you lose, which you might do anyway. But if you lose, make it mean something. If you're going to go down, go down for a reason. **NR**

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The Way Back

'08 is the best revenge

RAMESH PONNURU

THIS time, let's not fight among ourselves. It can be healthy for parties to engage in intramural recriminations after a defeat. But there really is no need for a Republican bloodbath this time. Everyone knows why Republicans lost so badly, and no faction of the party can take or escape all of the blame. Both moderates and conservatives lost, and both the congressional Republicans and the president contributed to the defeat.

Republicans lost because of setbacks in Iraq, scandal, and the absence of a reform agenda. Those last two factors combined to create the perception that Republicans were more interested in self-preservation than in the public good. None of these failures have distinctively moderate or conservative fingerprints on them.

After past election defeats, influential Republicans and the press argued that social conservatives were the culprits. This time, I suspect that this sentiment will largely be confined to the press, and echoed only by fringe players in the party. In 1992, social conservatives were sufficiently new to the party that a purge could plausibly be threatened. They are now too integrated into the party for that to happen. They also have more media allies to help them make their case than they did then, and those media allies are more influential among Republicans than they were then.

It helps that the political case against social conservatives is absurd. They fared better than—which is to say, not quite as disastrously as—the Republicans did. Their marriage initiatives outperformed Republican candidates in most places, and Democrats had either to co-opt them or to surrender to them to win a few districts.

Mr. Ponnuru, an NR senior editor, is the author of *The Party of Death: The Democrats, the Media, the Courts, and the Disregard for Human Life.*

A POLITICAL GAME PLAN

So as enjoyable as a Republican civil war would be, there may not be many people inside the party willing to wage it. Here are a few ideas on what Republicans should do instead.

Don't write off the blue states, but write off the blue districts. The remaining northeastern Republicans say that it's urgent for the party to cater to the voters of their region. The party can't just be a southern club. They're right on the second point, but not the first. Over the next few years, Republicans are almost certainly going to lose more House and Senate seats in the places that John Kerry carried in 2004. When Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins retire, Maine may start electing Democrats. If Republicans can win some of the districts that Bush carried in 2004, however, they can make net gains.

The first priority should be to take back the red districts that Republicans lost because of scandal. That's one seat in Texas, two in Pennsylvania, one in Ohio, and maybe one in Florida, right there—which is a third of the way to a majority. The second priority should be to reclaim the red seats that were lost because of temporary factors such as the president's (or the Republican governor's) unpopularity. Ten to fifteen seats in this category might be reclaimable. Third should be to take the districts that, until this year, were trending Republican. The most promising area for growth is in the Midwest, and especially the vote-rich upper Midwest, which is both socially conservative and increasingly economically dynamic.

Of course the party should try to recruit strong candidates in the Northeast. And if the political climate looks favorable to Republicans in 2007 and 2008, then by all means they should spend money there. But the party's strategy, especially its legislative strategy, should be geared toward driving red and pink areas of the

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country away from Nancy Pelosi, not toward making the northeastern rump of the party comfortable, when those two imperatives conflict (as they frequently will). Blue-district Republicans and red-state Democrats will both hate the idea of having to vote on socially conservative amendments, for example. Republicans ought to push for such amendments anyway.

Cull the weak. All incumbent Republicans who ran lousy campaigns in 2006 should be discouraged from running to get their seats back. Anne Northup in Kentucky was advised to close her campaign by drawing a contrast between the parties, and chose the traditional warm-and-fuzzy ending instead. Melissa Hart of Pennsylvania was advised to take her challenger seriously over the summer, and didn't. John Hostettler of Indiana wanted to run his campaign in his own idiosyncratic way. All three lost. New candidates ought to run next time.

Republicans have paid dearly for their clubbishness. John Boehner, to his credit, urged his Ohio colleague Bob Ney to leave Congress—but more than a year after it was clear that Ney's ethics had gotten him in serious trouble. Tom DeLay stuck around too long. Don Sherwood of Pennsylvania, whose mistress accused him of choking her, should never have made it to the ballot. Ditto Senator Conrad Burns of Montana: Any other Republican candidate would have won that seat, and freed up resources to win others.

THE POLICY FIGHT

Dust off the president's veto pen. The veto packs a massive punch in determining policy. It is worth 17 Senate votes and 73 House votes. The president can block a lot of bad legislation by using it. President Bush has used it only once, largely because he did not think it would help Republicans for him to veto legislation that emerged from a Republican Congress. Whatever the wisdom of that calculation, it no longer applies.

The president can't veto everything he dislikes, of course. Democrats will almost certainly revert to the strategy Senate majority leader George Mitchell used against Bush's father. He would send popular liberal legislation to the president, and Bush would have to choose between alienating his base by signing it or disappointing the public by vetoing it. Much of Bill Clinton's 1992 platform consisted of pledges to sign the bills Bush had vetoed. Democrats seeking the White House in 2008 will want to set traps for the president on stem-cell research, price controls for prescription drugs, and many other issues. Republicans will have to cut a deal on some of them, as they are already suggesting they will on the minimum wage.

Sometimes congressional Republicans will want to pass the buck to the president, voting for popular bills they know are flawed and getting him to veto them. For the party as a whole, however, it will usually be best if such legislation never reaches Bush's desk. When nice-sounding legislation is bottled up in Congress, and especially when it is filibustered, the politicians responsible take some heat—but the public pays more attention to the drama of a veto than to the absence of action.

Fight for judges. The Democrats' opposition to Bush's judicially conservative nominees was a big issue in 2002 and 2004, and hardly an issue at all in 2006. It's no coincidence that Republicans did well in the first two elections and not the third (although it's obviously not the whole story either). Republicans can win these fights, even in the minority.

Try bipartisanship. Seriously. Conservatives are suspicious of bipartisanship. To them, it sounds like collusion, a conspiracy against the public. And so it can be. But there may be areas where Republicans, if they are creative and flexible, can advance conservative policy objectives by working with Democrats. Finding such areas of agreement need not be inconsistent with either party's playing hardball to win the next election.

Besides, improved policy is the point of political victories. So we should not avoid making it for fear that Democrats will be able to take part of the credit. It is possible that Republicans will extend their hands only to have Democrats slap them away. But if so, voters will reward Republicans for trying.

The War on Terror is one area where it may be possible to work together. We had bipartisanship on the issue from 9/11 through late 2003, so it can't be impossible to attain. But that will mean allowing Congress to be more involved in national-security policy

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than the president has wanted even when Republicans ran it.

Education is another issue where some cooperation is possible. The Democrats will want to spend more money, of course. But there is widespread agreement that the formula the government uses to figure out which schools are succeeding and which failing needs to be adjusted, and even agreement on the outlines of how to adjust it.

The president need not give up even on the possibility of reforming Social Security and the tax code—if, that is, he is willing to pay more attention to conservatives' interests than to conservative think tanks. The Democrats have refused every Republican offer to parley as long as personal accounts are on the table. Republicans could agree to take them off the table for the next two years. In return, however, they should ask Democrats to take tax increases off the table. Each party would be giving up the proposal that gives the other party hives—and neither party would have an excuse to stay away from talks.

If tax hikes and personal accounts are off the table, the only way to improve the program's solvency is to slow the growth of Social Security benefits. Probably the most palatable way to do that, for the public and for Democrats, is the "progressive indexing" that Bush proposed too late in the game in 2005. If Democrats still balk, Republicans should sweeten the deal by agreeing to one of the Democrats' pet ideas: using tax credits to help low-wage workers build financial assets. The only thing wrong with this liberal proposal is that it should have been conservatives' first. If conservatives are right in thinking that making more Americans into investors will expand the constituency for free-market, limited-government reforms, they should jump at this chance.

Personal accounts are a cleaner way of expanding the new investor class. But the chief way they would do so would be by letting low-wage workers invest some of their money. A tax-credit proposal would accomplish the same goal indirectly. And our future national debt would be reduced at the same time: What's not to like? Maybe Alan Greenspan could be coaxed to broker the deal. Republicans ought to be able to get a better bargain than they did the last time he brokered one, in 1983, when they had many fewer House seats.

Tax reform also presents an opportunity that should be seized. The principal liberal objections to the type of tax reform that conservatives have proposed are that they would increase the deficit or favor the rich. But it should be possible to devise a plan that simplifies the tax code, promotes growth, and helps families without raising either objection. I outlined one in these pages a few months ago ("A Tax Reform to Run With," April 24).

The plan would expand the tax credit for children to $5,000, replace the standard deduction with a tax credit, and eliminate almost all itemized deductions. It would get rid of most tax credits and the alternative minimum tax. It would cut tax rates on estates, capital gains, and dividends. It would feature two tax rates instead of the current six: The top rate would be 30 percent, and taxpayers in the lower bracket would pay 15 percent.

The result would be a return to the simplified tax code that followed the 1986 tax reform, but with higher rates and better treatment of investments. The tax burden would shift slightly upward (even the way liberals calculate these things). The richest taxpayers would probably end up paying a higher average tax rate. But their marginal tax rate—the rate that most affects their economic incentives and thus growth—would go down.

The result wouldn't be the flat tax or national sales tax of supply-siders' dreams. But it would bring their dreams a little closer to reality than could otherwise happen, and promote some goods—such as recognition of the financial investment that raising kids represents—to which supply-siders have too often been blind. And since the plan eliminates the alternative minimum tax, which disproportionately hits blue states, Democrats would have an added incentive to get on board.

Too many conservatives have bought the comforting myth that Republicans would have won if only they had not enacted such big-government policies as the prescription-drug benefit.

Would Democrats try to hijack tax reform to push through tax increases? They probably couldn't sustain a majority in Congress for tax hikes, and if they could the president would win the resulting veto fight. Republicans had less political strength during the 1986 tax reform, and should not be afraid to engage now.

THE PATH OF REALISM

The Republican party is unlikely to tear itself apart because a few of its members believe, as the Republican Main Street Partnership, a moderate outfit, put it, that the "far Right" was "solely responsible for Democratic gains." The greater danger is that the bulk of the party will act on a conservative conventional wisdom about the election defeats that is almost as mistaken. It is not the case that Republicans lost simply because party leaders were insufficiently committed to conservative principles, or that a renewed devotion to those principles will bring with it renewed power.

Too many conservatives have bought the comforting myth that Republicans would have won if only they had not enacted such big-government policies as the prescription-drug benefit. But the truth is that the public, to the extent that it is dissatisfied with the drug benefit, wants it to be more generous rather than less. Moreover, conservatives did not abandon the Republicans; independent voters did.

Conservatism ceases to be a type of statecraft and becomes an ideology when it loses its political grounding, which is to say, its connection to reality. For conservatives to make headway in today's daunting circumstances, they are going to have to find a way to maintain their principles while abjuring wishful thinking. **NR**

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■ HISTORY

Of Providence And Policy

Three assassination attempts failed, and an evil empire fell

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

Did the attempted assassinations of John Paul II, Ronald Reagan, and Margaret Thatcher change history? Were these leaders spared by God for the great purpose of bringing about the largely peaceful collapse of the Soviet Union? Did God's hand, as John Paul believed, "guide" the bullets and the bomb those crucial inches and feet from their targets? And did the failed assassinations rebound on their perpetrators?

Just as the scientist seeking truths of nature must examine only natural phenomena, so the historian seeking truths about the human past has to limit himself to investigating human actions. Miracles are beyond his professional capacity. But what the historian may legitimately conclude and what the survivor of an attempted murder may believe are two very different things. And what the survivor believes may give rise to historical actions of the first importance. So what did Reagan, Thatcher, and the pope believe about their survival?

John Paul and Reagan told us very plainly: They believed that God had spared them for some great purpose. John Paul seems to have believed in particular that his devotion to Our Lady of Fatima helped save his life. A young pilgrim in St. Peter's Square held up an image of the Virgin Mary, and the pope, by leaning forward to see it better at just the moment Mehmet Ali Agca fired, may have ensured that the bullet missed the point on his body where it was aimed. Yet the pope's gratitude to Our Lady of Fatima may not have greatly affected his policies or Vatican diplomacy. Long before May 1981 John Paul believed that "in the designs of Providence there are no mere coincidences." His survival may have given him a more dramatic sense of that truth, but it did not change his conviction. His policies toward the Soviet Union—his call for religious freedom and human rights in the Eastern bloc, his support for Solidarity in Poland—were set in place two years before the Agca attack, and were not significantly altered for another six years. Then the pope's reason for adopting a softer approach was that Gorbachev—whom John Paul sometimes described to his friends as "a providential man"—was dismantling the repressive apparatus of state atheism in the Soviet Union with his policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. In the interests of "reconciliation," John Paul would have sought better relations with the Soviet Union at any point when it was willing to extend greater freedom to believers.

It is unlikely therefore that Agca's attack caused a major change in the pope's outlook or in Vatican policy. Its failure, of course, meant that John Paul's powerful support for religious and other freedoms in the Soviet bloc not only continued but was reinforced by his near-martyr status.

Thatcher's narrow escape too reinforced rather than changed her existing policies. The Brighton bombing, executed by the Irish Republican Army, occurred five years into her premiership, when the government's policies on almost all issues were firmly set and were even bearing fruit. American missiles were being installed in Europe, the Falklands War had been won, the British economy was recovering fast from the recession of the early 1980s, the "peace movement" had been successfully seen off, and inflation had been brought under control. The Anglo-Irish agreement was still being negotiated, but the bombing's consequence was the opposite of what the IRA had intended: It impelled the British government to toughen its negotiating stance temporarily to show that the bomb had had no effect. It had even less effect on British policy toward the Soviet Union. Two months after Brighton, Thatcher held a meeting at Chequers, the prime minister's country residence, with Mikhail Gorbachev, then tipped as the likely successor to the ailing Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko. She pronounced Gorbachev a man she could "do business with," recommended him as such to Reagan, and began a new course in East-West relations.

Thatcher was then at the height of her powers as a self-confident national leader making an impact on the world stage. But her self-confidence was a very matter-of-fact one rooted in hard work, mastery of detail, experience, and firm conviction. When a teacher at school suggested that the young Margaret Thatcher had been lucky to win a prize, she replied indignantly, "I wasn't lucky. I deserved it." Her self-confidence, though it sometimes bordered on arrogance, coexisted with real humility. She knew that she was bright and worked hard and so "deserved" to succeed, but she was also aware of her deficiencies and unafraid to admit ignorance or to take instruction from those with the knowledge or skills she lacked. When preparing for a major meeting with someone like Gorbachev, Prime Minister Thatcher would summon a seminar of Kremlinologists to brief her. When she realized that she was a poor television performer, she asked the TV producer Gordon Reece (and on one occasion Sir Laurence Olivier) for advice on improving her appearance, voice, and acting skills. (Reece became one of her most important advisers.) Indeed, she has never stopped improving herself. To the end of her premiership there was a small measure of insecurity in the clever provincial scholarship girl moving in the great world. It was simply conquered daily by hard work and great dedication.

But her survival at Brighton did not seem to change her. As far as others can judge, it gave her no greater sense of historical destiny, no messianic conviction. And when I directly asked her whether, like Reagan and the pope, she believed that God had spared her for some great purpose, she said simply, "No." She seemed to think that it would be vainglorious to believe so. This should not surprise us. Her religious upbringing, which shaped her throughout her premiership, was a very practical Methodist one. It encouraged good works more than introspection, and concern for others before oneself. Her first actions after the bombing reflected

Mr. O'Sullivan, an editor-at-large of NATIONAL REVIEW, is the author of *The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister* (Regnery), from which this essay is adapted.

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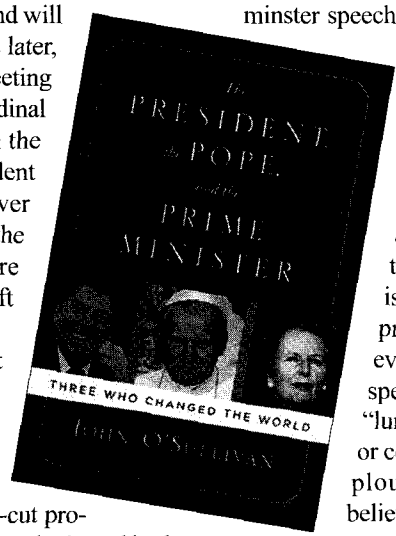
this: She prayed, she visited the injured to see how she could help them, and she got on with work. She believed that government policy should reflect the moral commonsense of a Christian culture (and famously differed with the liberal Anglican bishops on what that implied). But she thought more in terms of trying to do what the God of her (much underlined) Methodist catechism wanted than in terms of God's having a special purpose for her. And there was a personal factor. Several of her closest friends and advisers—notably her leadership campaign manager, Airey Neave—had been murdered by the IRA. That alone would have deterred her from dwelling too much on her survival as an example of providence in history.

Unlike the pope, Thatcher was not vividly aware that God had intervened to save her for a purpose; like him, however, she maintained her existing political intentions.

* * *

Reagan, however, was changed within moments of his shooting. While still in the hospital, he told his daughter Maureen that God had spared his life for a purpose. When he returned to the White House on April 11, 1981, he wrote in his journal that night: "Whatever happens now I owe my life to God and will try to serve Him in every way I can." Four days later, he asked staffer Michael Deaver to arrange a meeting with a senior cleric. Deaver invited Terence Cardinal Cooke to the White House. After a meeting in the private quarters upstairs, the weakened president told the cardinal, "I have decided that whatever time I have left is left for Him." And in public, the president said exactly the same thing in more Reaganesque terms: "Whatever time I have left belongs to the Big Fella Upstairs."



In terms of policy, that did not mean any great change of direction. Reagan had only just arrived at the White House when he was shot. Very few policies had been established firmly enough to be altered. And the policies that were pursued after the shooting, in particular the domestic tax-cut program and the defense buildup, had been clearly foreshadowed both in the campaign and in the four years of radio broadcasts and speeches Reagan had given prior to his election as president.

The first effect of Reagan's survival was his greater clout with Congress. This brought him not only a standing ovation when he addressed both houses two weeks after leaving the hospital but also the defection of 63 Democrats to support his Program of Economic Recovery. It passed the Democrat-controlled House by a margin of 253 to 176. A much more important effect, however, was Reagan's greater determination to pursue the policies he favored and, no less vital, to articulate the moral arguments behind them against all opposition, including that of the Democrats, the government bureaucracy, and even some within his own party. He thought he knew the great purpose for which God had spared him. It was to hasten the collapse of Communism.

That did not mean, as many critics and the Soviets themselves speculated, war or nuclear confrontation with Moscow. Reagan intended to compete the Soviets into bankruptcy, when they would be ready to make the compromises that signaled a genuine peace. But he began by offering them a chance to avoid that competition. He drafted a personal letter to Leonid Brezhnev. It coupled a lifting of Carter's grain embargo (promised by Reagan in the 1980 campaign) with a personal appeal to Brezhnev to join him in shaping a lasting peace in which ordinary people on both sides of the Iron Curtain could raise their families without fear.

Brezhnev responded with a reply from Agitprop Central blaming the United States for the Cold War in terms that Reagan later described as "icy." Even Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet ambassador to the U.S., wrote in his memoirs that the official Soviet reply was a "standard polemical" response that "underestimated the psychological aspects" of Reagan's letter. With that response the Soviets threw away an opportunity to end the Cold War on terms acceptable to them—and confirmed Reagan's view that they would have to be brought to the point of defeat before they would consider compromise.

From then onward, Reagan carried out the strategy of economic and military competition intensified by rhetorical honesty. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger's military buildup was the most visible expression of that strategy. But Reagan's truthfulness about the nature of Communism and the Soviet Union was almost as important—notably, his prediction in his 1982 Westminster speech to the British parliament that Communism was destined shortly to be "on the ash heap of history," and his description of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" in his 1983 speech to the National Association of Evangelicals.

We now know that those speeches had a vital effect in weakening Soviet morale and encouraging dissidents throughout the Soviet bloc. At the time, however, Reagan seemed intellectually isolated. Henry Steele Commager, a distinguished presidential historian who claimed to have read every presidential address, called the "evil empire" speech the worst in history. The Soviets called it "lunatic anti-Communism." Allies were either silent or condemned "megaphone diplomacy." But Reagan ploughed on with his defiant truth-telling. He believed that the great purpose for which he had been spared by God did not include sugarcoating the reality of totalitarianism. When poor deluded John Hinckley pulled the trigger that day, he inflicted a mortal wound on the Soviet Union.

Like all the events in his life, the attempted assassination became for Reagan the basis of a good anecdote. On one such occasion, in 1982, he told the story just as his aides were trying to hurry some conservative activists out the door after a "stroking" session about taxes. When Reagan finished, one of them spoke up sympathetically.

"Yes, Mr. President, that was a terrible day, a terrible day. When I heard the news, all I could think of was—*this means that George Bush is going to be president.*"

Everybody froze as the ruthless implications of this remark sank in. The activists looked at their shoes, the aides at their boss.

Reagan let the suspense hang in the air for a moment. Then he laughed. That allowed everybody else to laugh as well.

"What makes God laugh?" goes an old joke. "People making plans." With God making the plans, Reagan could afford to laugh. **NR**

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the long view

ROB LONG

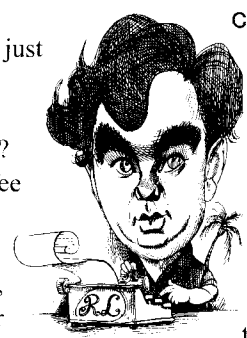
Rumsfeld at Large

Rumsfeld behind the Returns/Refunds counter at Best Buy:

CUSTOMER: "Hi, I'd like to return this DVD player please."
RUMSFELD: "That's a perfectly reasonable request."
CUSTOMER: "Thanks."
RUMSFELD: "You didn't let me finish. That's a perfectly reasonable request *if we lived in a perfect world.* But I'm old enough to know—goodness, quite a bit older than you, from the looks of it—but I'm old enough to know that we don't, in fact, live in such a world."
CUSTOMER: "Um, do I get to return it or not?"
RUMSFELD: "It's not a question of 'do you' or 'don't you.' Good gracious, things are a bit too complicated for that. It's a question of receipts. It's a question of original packaging."
CUSTOMER: "Oh, yeah. See, about that. I had the receipt and the box and stuff but, like, I just split up with my girlfriend, see, and she—"
RUMSFELD: "Let me stop you right there. The follow-on portion of your statement is really unnecessary. There are things that we need. Things that we need from you. And you either have them or you do not. I think it's useful for us to get back to basics in our exchange. Do you *have* the receipt and the original packaging?"
CUSTOMER: "Well, see, I *did* but then my *girlfriend*—"
RUMSFELD: "Stop. Right. There."

Rumsfeld at Starbucks:

CUSTOMER: "Let me have a venti mochaccino with whipped cream. Oh, and one of those non-fat muffins."
RUMSFELD: "I'm sorry? What was the second part of your request?"
CUSTOMER: "A non-fat muffin."
RUMSFELD: "But where on earth is the logic to your request?"
CUSTOMER: "I beg your pardon?"
RUMSFELD: "The venti mochaccino is whole milk, chocolate, whipped cream, and heaven knows what else. At last measure, the calorie count was something in the eight hundreds, though the metrics on this are a bit hazy and I apologize for that. It's just simply something we all have to accept: We are never going to get perfectly accurate numbers on this sort of thing. Still, we can safely say that the venti mochaccino is a *high-calorie* beverage. And so when I put that in my head alongside your second request, a *non-fat muffin*, I'm just puzzled. Where's the logic here? What's the thought process? Where's the thinking through the problem?"
CUSTOMER: "I just . . . I just don't want all of those calories in the muffin."
RUMSFELD: "In the *muffin*? I see. So the specialty coffee drink drenched in creams and chocolates is what? A gimme? A non-item? Madam, I'd like you to gather your things, lumber your enormous girth outside, take a deep breath, *think about your choices*, and re-enter the Starbucks with a clear, direct request that holds together logically. Can you do that, ma'am?"



Rumsfeld on MTV's Total Request Live*:*

DAMIEN FAHEY: "Hey! 'Sup? Damien Fahey here chillaxin' with former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld."
RUMSFELD: "Hello, youngsters."
DAMIEN FAHEY: "So we're just kickin' it here, Don, hangin' and gettin' a chance to vibe a bit. Anyone have any questions for the former secretary?"
RUMSFELD: "May I ask a question?"
DAMIEN FAHEY: "Totally."
RUMSFELD: "It's the middle of the afternoon. Why are none of these children in school?"

Rumsfeld at Quizno's:

RUMSFELD: "Welcome to Quizno's. May I take your order?"
CUSTOMER: "Um . . . yeah. Can I get a regular Italian?"
RUMSFELD: "I see no reason to deny your request."
CUSTOMER: "Cool. Can I get that on parmesan bread?"
RUMSFELD: "You may. But I would like to point out that your sandwich request comes with the choice of only white or wheat bread. Parmesan bread entails an extra charge. So let me turn the question back around. Is that charge something you're willing to pay?"
CUSTOMER: "Um . . . how much extra?"
RUMSFELD: "Wrong question. Goodness. Just the wrong question entirely. Do you *want* the parmesan bread? If yes, then let's get into procurement issues and so forth."
CUSTOMER: "But how much is the parmesan bread and stuff?"
RUMSFELD: "You know what baffles me? And I realize that I'm digressing here, and please forgive me, but I'm absolutely nonplussed by the idea that the *sequence* of events in this exchange is somehow unclear to you. Do you have a pen? Or a pencil? And some kind of flat surface or paper or something to write on? Because I think it would be a useful exercise for you to write down the order in which these issues need to be decided. Sandwich type. Then bread type. Then cost. And then is the time for dialogue."
CUSTOMER: "Maybe I should just go to Subway."
RUMSFELD: "Heaven knows I can't stop you from doing that. Constitutionally speaking."

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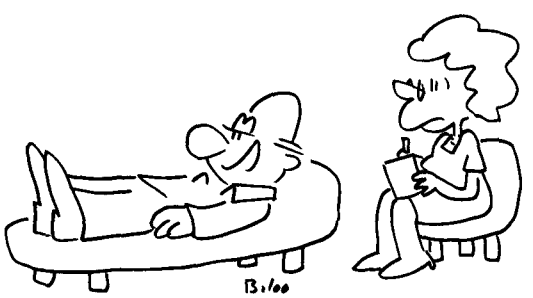
HELP

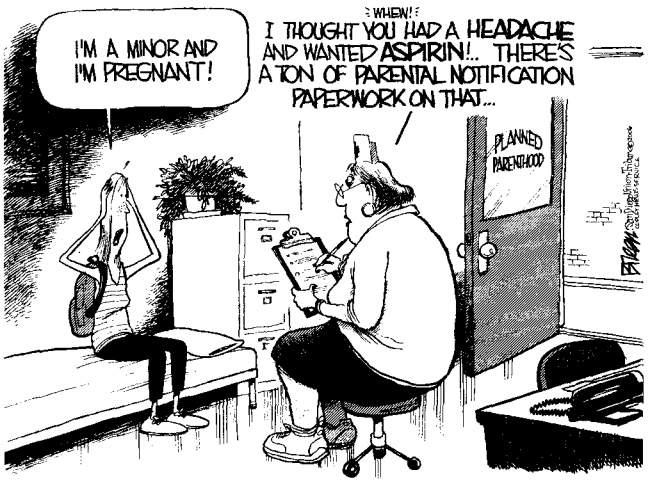
Dear Santa:

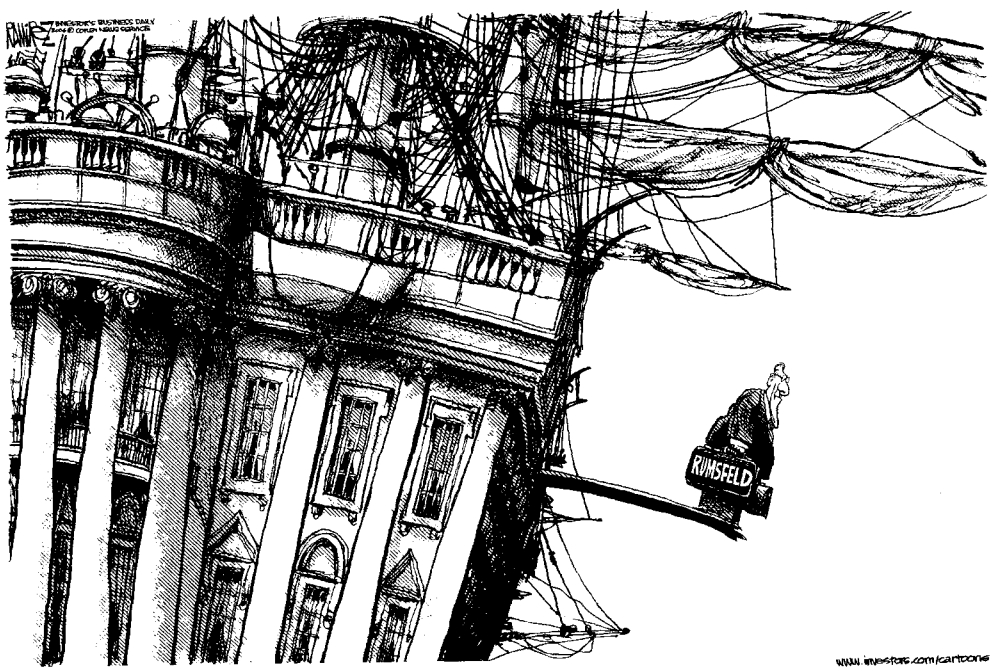
Leahy wants John Bolton dumped.
Rangel wants handouts.
Biden can't make up his mind.
Rockefeller pouts.
Boxer wants a union for
Every slack-jawed elf.
Teddy's list's so loopy, I'd
Leave it on the shelf.

—W. H. von Dreele



"I think my inner child needs a spanking."


I'M A MINOR AND I'M PREGNANT!
WHEW! I THOUGHT YOU HAD A HEADACHE AND WANTED ASPIRIN!.. THERE'S A TON OF PARENTAL NOTIFICATION PAPERWORK ON THAT...
PLANNED PARENTHOOD



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How We Fight

Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy, by Frederick W. Kagan (Encounter, 432 pp., $29.95)

MACKUBIN THOMAS OWENS

THE Bush administration's military policy in general and its conduct of the Iraq War in particular have taken some serious hits lately. Two recent books—*Cobra II* by Michael Gordon and Mick Trainor, and *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* by Thomas Ricks—have launched harsh indictments against current policies, but tended to ignore the fact that war is always characterized by friction and the "fog of uncertainty." Things go wrong in war despite the very best planning. Frederick Kagan's *Finding the Target*, though also extremely critical of the Bush administration, is an altogether different kind of book, one that readers will be consulting long after the others are on the remainder tables. By laying bare the systemic weaknesses that have hampered the U.S. military's thinking about war, Kagan provides the necessary context for understanding our predicament, and deciding what to do about it.

Mr. Owens is an associate dean of academics and a professor of national-security affairs at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I. He is writing a history of U.S. civil-military relations.

Anyone familiar with Kagan's earlier work will not be surprised by the insights of *Finding the Target*. He is a historian of considerable range, whose recently published *The End of the Old Order* is a magnificent, in-depth treatment of Europe during the War of the Third Coalition against Napoleon. After teaching at the U.S. Military Academy for several years, Kagan now resides at the American Enterprise Institute, where, among other things, he directs a major study on American land power.

Finding the Target takes aim at the Pentagon's decade-and-a-half-old vision of war as being shaped primarily by technological innovation, especially in information technology. A decade ago, the term was "revolution in military affairs" (RMA). Today it is "transformation." A 2003 Pentagon publication, "Transformation Planning Guidance," provides a template for transforming the current force into "information age military forces . . . [that] will be less platform-centric and more network-centric. They will be able to distribute forces more widely by increasing information sharing via a secure network that provides actionable information at all levels of command. This, in turn, will create conditions for increased speed of command and opportunities for self-coordination across the battlespace."

This understanding of military transformation, Kagan claims, is vague and confused. It is based on false premises, and lies at the heart of our problems in Iraq. If not corrected, this vision might well cause even greater problems in the future.

Kagan does not deny that the military has undergone a major transformation, but he sees it as a phenomenon that began after Vietnam in response to the twin imperatives arising from the shame of defeat and fear of the future threat posed by the USSR. This transformation was driven by the geostrategic reality that the U.S. faced in the 1970s. Kagan corrects the mistaken belief, all too current today, that the Soviet threat was monolithic and simple, making defense planning relatively easy. In fact, the Soviet threat was vast, complex, amorphous, and unpredictable, requiring defense planners to make tough strategic choices as they attempted to balance capabilities across the spectrum of conflict, from central thermonuclear war to local insurgency.

The transformation of the 1970s did not arise primarily as the result of technological advance. It was driven instead by a complex interplay of new manpower policies (the shift from conscription to the All Volunteer Force); a revolution in training; a "rebirth of military doctrine" culminating in AirLand Battle and the Maritime Strategy (doctrines designed to defeat the Soviets without the use of nuclear weapons); and the fielding of new systems that relied neither on "off the shelf" nor on "leap ahead" technologies, but instead on what Kagan calls "that narrow sliver of technological development that is just visible on the horizon" (e.g., "fly-by-wire" avionics, the targeting computer for the M1 Abrams Tank, and the tracking systems for air-to-air missiles).

The first thing to note about this transformation is that it was not "designed" to achieve a preordained outcome. A "transformed" military was not the goal. The services were merely attempting to correct the deficiencies that had been revealed by Vietnam in order to confront the geostrategic challenges posed by the USSR and other actors in the world—but the result was an all-encompassing, holistic, transformational synergy that broke through service cultures, military conservatism, and fiscal constraints to improve the effectiveness of the U.S. military.

Kagan provides a *tour d'horizon* of the issues and debates that brought us to where we are today: the role of Ronald Reagan in supporting and even expanding transformation, which could have faltered in the absence of his grand strategy and the funds necessary to implement it; the "revolution in airpower theory" advanced by John Boyd and John Warden; and the role of the 1991 Gulf War, which began the process of altering the focus of transformation from changes in warfare necessitated by altered geostrategic realities to an astrategic focus on technological development.

After the Gulf War, military transformation was shorn of its political and geostrategic context and came to mean

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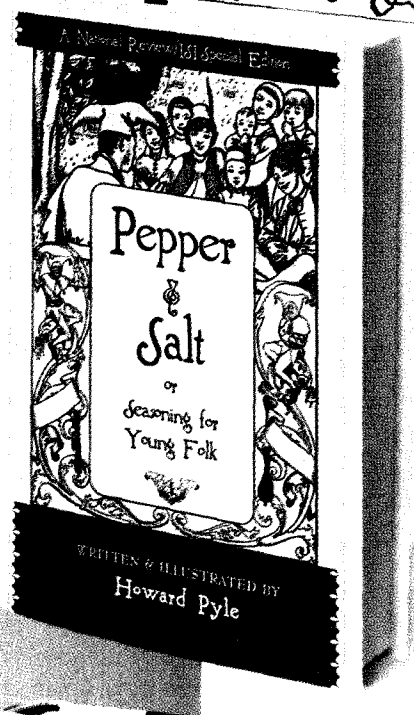
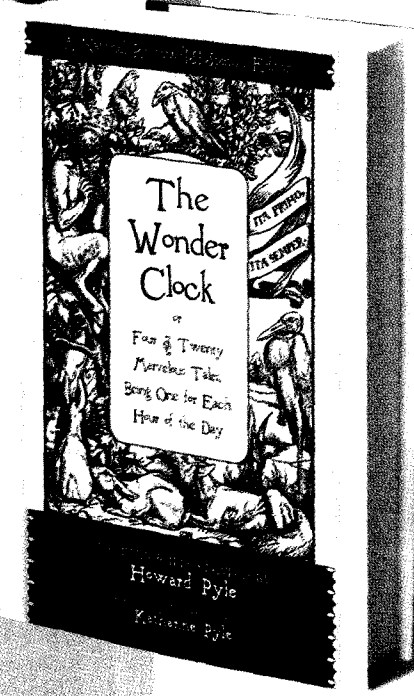
NR's New Classic Children's Book

Three wonderful new books—each beautiful, lavishly illustrated, and brimming with enchanting tales—that are *musts* for your personal family library!





National Review and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute are proud to announce the publication of three wonderful new books—lavishly illustrated collections of wholesome and trustworthy tales that will delight anyone aged 8 to 80!—that are *musts* for every family's library, and wonderful gifts for deserving sons, daughters, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

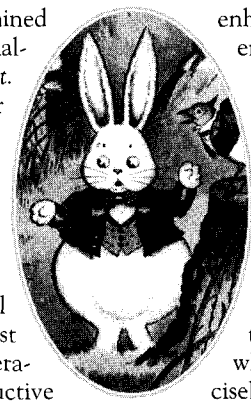
Two of these precious books—*The Wonder Clock* and *Pepper & Salt*—are the work of the great Howard Pyle (1853–1911). Regarded as one of America's great illustrators and founder of the influential "Brandywine School," Pyle first gained renown for his self-illustrated serialized children's stories published in *St. Nicholas Magazine* and other major publications.

But he became hugely popular in 1887 when, in conjunction with his sister Katharine, he wrote and illustrated *The Wonder Clock*. Now nearly six-score years later, this groundbreaking collection is still considered to be one of the best works of American children's literature. Its 24 entertaining and instructive tales (including the famous "King Stork")—one for each hour of the day—overflow with fascinating characters, and are indescribably enhanced by Howard Pyle's powerful illustrations.

Any child will find this book a good friend. "I put on my dream-cap one day and stepped into Wonderland," Pyle writes in the Preface to *The Wonder Clock*. It is the first of many exciting steps he takes in this collection, and your child or grandchild will find it a true joy to be Pyle's companion on this most delightful of literary journeys!

The Wonder Clock is part of a convenient boxed set, joined by another of Pyle's famous works, *Pepper & Salt*. From within the cover of this unique book come the delicious an powerful fragrances of an entire spice sho It is fair to say that this visually extravagan tome was not so much written by Howar Pyle, nor so much illustrated by him, as i was designed by him. It is a work of art.

Pepper & Salt is so special and so distinc that it will immediately capture the atten tion and the imagination of all, from chil dren to adults. Two dozen beautiful an enchanting full-page fable-poems—mischie vous, humorous, and instructive lesson adorned by Pyle's delightful line art an enhanced by his unique lettering—embrace *Pepper & Salt*'s eight fine ly told and lavishly illustrate tales.



They wowed America youth when first published 12 years ago, and, as all works o great literature do, *The Wonde Clock* and *Pepper & Salt* hav withstood the test of time They remain excellent litera ture, as fresh and engaging a when first published. They are pre cisely the books today's childre sorely need to read.

The handsome boxed-set collection o these two Pyle classics is $45.00. We've onl produced 1,000 sets, so you are encourage to act promptly to order yours while our sup ply lasts. As our "thank you" for takin advantage of this offer, we'll also send you free copy of *Wizard of Oz* author L. Fran Baum's beloved (and profusely illustrated tale, *Queen Zixi of Ix*. Shipping and handlin is free, and *National Review* will be only to happy to accommodate you in sending thes books as gifts (accompanied by an announce ment card with your personal greeting), all a no extra charge.

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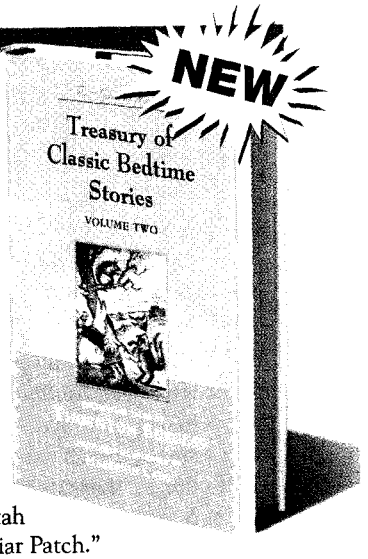
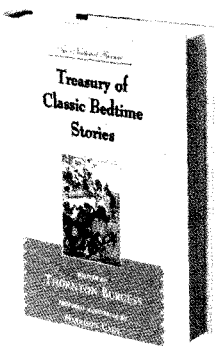
Are a Wholesome Must for Every Family!



We're equally proud to announce another new (and long-awaited) book—*The National Review Treasury of Classic Bedtime Stories, Volume Two*. Reprising the enchanting "Bedtime Story" books written by the great Thornton W. Burgess, this handsome hardcover collection features an array of woodland creatures—some saintly, some personable, others cranky and haughty, some even naughty, but all fun (and never dull!)—in simple, well-written stories that always entertain *and* teach a worthy lesson about human nature.

You will love it. And so (more so!) will those youngsters whom you give it to, whether for a birthday or Christmas gift. Inside this handsome hardcover's 346 pages—brightened by 60 of Harrison Cady's enchanting drawings (reproduced just as they appeared in the original old books!)—are ten terrific "adventure" tales of Buster Bear, Old Mr. Toad, Prickly Porky, Old Man Coyote, Paddy the Beaver, Mrs. Quack, Bobby Coon, Jimmy Skunk, Bob White, Ol' Mistah Buzzard, and the other colorful and loveable denizens of the "Green Meadows" and the "Briar Patch."

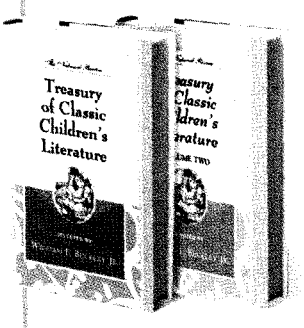


GET THE 'ORIGINAL' EDITION AND SAVE $10!

Burgess's tales entertained millions of Americans over two generations, and they remain exactly the kind of little dramas you will want to read to your wee ones or grandchildren as a prelude to sweet dreams. And developing readers will take to the book on their own like, well . . . like Buster Bear takes to honey! *The National Review Treasury of Classic Bedtime Stories* is refreshingly old-fashioned: Its tales are wholesome, fun, and instructive. This is one book that you will really want to share with a deserving child. Give a book that will be prized forever: The hardcover edition of *The National Review Treasury of Classic Bedtime Stories, Volume Two* is only $29.95!

And if you want both "Bedtime" books (the original volume has received much critical acclaim), they're yours for only $49.90—that's a $10 savings. Remember: postage and shipping are FREE, and we'll gladly ship gift copies (including with your books a handsome gift-announcement card—with a personal message should you so desire!).

THEY'RE BACK! NOW GET BOTH *NR*'S ACCLAIMED "CLASSIC CHILDREN'S LITERATURE" TREASURIES COLLECTIONS AND SAVE $10!



We've gone back to press and are now able to offer the set of "Classic Children's Literature" Treasuries (Original and "Volume Two" editions). These critically acclaimed collections are *musts* for every home, and are *perfect* gifts for young readers. Each big (over 500 pages!), lavishly illustrated hardcover contains over three dozen fabulous stories—personally selected by William F. Buckley Jr.!—by premier writers including Mark Twain, Rudyard Kipling, Lewis Carroll, L. Frank Baum, Louisa May Alcott, Jack London, Frances Hodgson Burnett, and many more *gifted* authors whose priceless literary gems are now polished, gleaming, and yours to thoroughly enjoy!

The critics have raved about these wonderful books. *Catholic Parent* magazine says these "excellent, wholesome" collections are filled with "wonderful children's stories that will delight, entertain and nourish your youngsters and teenagers." And the *Wall Street Journal* says they'll "excite in children an appreciation for the human condition." Every tale—whether about knights and princesses, giants or dwarfs, beggars and angels, whether tales of daring and silliness, or even saintliness, with brave girls defending their country and intrepid boys risking their lives to rescue others—is *wholesome*, entertaining, instructive, and inspirational. Each sells for $29.95, but they're available to you as a set for $49.90 (that includes free shipping and handling!).

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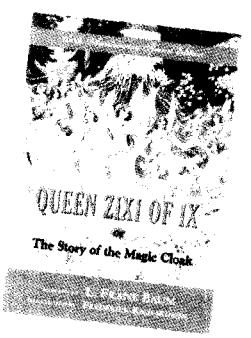

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hitting the right military target independent of the political goal. It began to reflect a "business" approach, stressing an economic concept of efficiency at the expense of military and political effectiveness. Some airpower advocates, for example, argued that air power is not only the necessary but also the sufficient cause of success in war, and that an air campaign alone could achieve decisive victory. Of course, their argument ignored the political context of war. As the recent Iraq War has demonstrated, the destruction of the "target set" and the resulting military success do not translate automatically into the achievement of the political goals for which the war was fought in the first place.

Some extreme advocates of transformation replaced the classic Clausewitzian trinity of primordial violence, chance, and probability, and the subordination of war to policy with a new technological trinity—intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance technologies—along with advanced command, control, communications, and computer systems and precision-strike munitions. They advanced a linear, mechanistic, and technocentric conception of war, wholly disconnected from what our adversary may think, want, or do. They envisioned a war fought independently of an adversary in a predictable, closed-loop environment in which friction, chance, and uncertainty are banished.

By the time George W. Bush became president, the consensus within the U.S. defense community was that 1) a revolution in military affairs based on information technology was underway; 2) the early post–Cold War period represented a "strategic pause" during which the U.S. would not confront an identifiable enemy (with the manageable exception of Iraq and North Korea), permitting planners to focus their attention on "the military after next"; 3) even in the absence of any idea about how an enemy might fight, planners could develop an appropriate counter; and 4) in Kagan's harsh paraphrase, "war was fundamentally a targeting drill and the only systems in future that would matter would be those that improved America's ability to put metal precisely on target."

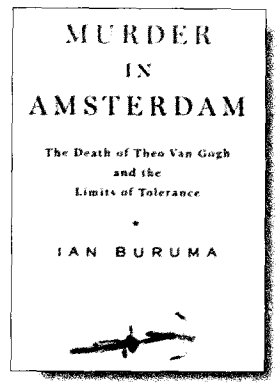
Kagan contends that today's problems in Iraq originated in the myopic focus of the U.S. defense community on the "minutiae of technology," which, while it enabled the military to identify crucial targets and destroy them with unprecedented accuracy and phenomenally low levels of collateral damage, prevented that same military from recognizing the real challenge—"designing military operations to achieve particular political objectives." Blindness to political objectives, "induced in part by more than a decade of military dogma arguing for the primacy of destruction over planning for political outcomes [e.g., the Weinberger Doctrine], largely explains the amazing failure to take obvious post-war dangers and problems into account" in the development of the Afghanistan and Iraq military campaigns.

Kagan contends that today's problems in Iraq originated in the myopic focus on the 'minutiae of technology.'

Kagan observes that "states have most commonly revolutionized their own militaries, or even war itself, not by setting out to do so but by trying to solve concrete technical, procedural, and strategic problems they faced." With this as his point of departure, he offers some valuable proposals for defense planning. Since 9/11 destroyed the illusion of a "strategic pause," Kagan suggests that we shorten our gaze, focusing first on immediate and near-term problems before turning our attention to an uncertain future. He argues that "regime change" wars are here to stay and that, to avoid the mistakes of Iraq, we need to "plan backwards" from our desired end state to the beginning of the campaign. In other words, "Phase IV" should be planned before "Phase I."

The real value of *Finding the Target* lies not in its prescriptions but in its analysis. As a glutted market illustrates, books that criticize the U.S. enterprise in Iraq are a dime a dozen, but for the most part they criticize the Bush administration as the source of all the problems. Kagan digs deeper and identifies a systemic problem that, if not corrected, will persist long after this administration. **NR**

Cultural Suicide



Murder in Amsterdam: The Death of Theo van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance, by Ian Buruma (Penguin, 320 pp., $24.95)

ANDREW STUTTAFORD

It's far too soon to know if the 2004 murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh by a Muslim fanatic will turn out to be a warning heeded in time, or if it will prove to be just another episode in the decline of a country wrecked by the mixing of multiculturalism with mass immigration. Judging by the nature of the debate ahead of Holland's upcoming elections, judging by the departure of parliamentarian Ayaan Hirsi Ali to the safer, more welcoming haven of America, and judging by this perceptive, misguided, depressing, and (sometimes unconsciously) revealing book, it will be the latter.

If *Murder in Amsterdam* is a grim read, it's not only because of the events its author recounts, but also because of the way he recounts them. Born in 1951, a child of the Dutch upper-middle class ("blazers and pearls and Hermès scarves"), and now a professor at Bard College, Ian Buruma is a distinguished man of letters, a gifted cultural historian, a skilled writer of impeccably refined sensibility: It's no surprise to see his byline occasionally popping up in *The*

Mr. Stuttaford is a contributing editor of National Review Online.

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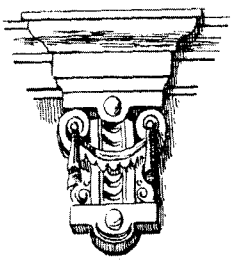
New Yorker. This background makes him both one of the best possible guides to van Gogh's murder and one of the worst.

Buruma's Dutch upbringing and well-traveled later years have left him nicely placed to help us understand a small, clubby country that can be tricky to penetrate and even more difficult to decode. With his help, we mingle with intellectuals, with politicians, and with Muslims, young and not so young, pious and not so pious. We meet Hirsi Ali herself, and we visit van Gogh's parents, still mourning the brilliant provocateur that was their wild, loutish, infuriating, and endearing son.



When it comes to describing the two protagonists in this terrible drama, Buruma rarely misses a trick. His vividly drawn portrait of Theo is made painful, not only by our knowledge of the slaughter to come, but also by the hideous irony that a man astute enough to realize that the old easygoing Holland was under lethal assault was too careless, too stubborn, and too confident to realize that he too was in danger. Nobody would harm him, said blithe, foolish Theo: He was just "the village idiot." But that familiar comfortable village had been torn down, replaced by a multicultural shantytown, yet another miserable utopia in which there would be no room for rowdy jesters, rude pranksters, or free spirits of any kind.

As for van Gogh's murderer, Mohammed Bouyeri, Buruma tracks his descent from minor misfit to holy warrior step by deluded step until that murderous November morning comes to seem inevitable, ordained, as logical as the carnage that concludes a Shakespearean tragedy. But if the *how* is made grippingly clear, Buruma leaves the *why* something of a mystery. Worse still, when it comes to suggesting how such horrors can be avoided in future, the best he can come up with is a bit more appeasement (he wouldn't use the word, of course), yet more "tolerance" and acceptance of the fact that "Islam is a European religion," a grand-sounding observation that is as obvious as it is unhelpful.

As always seems to be the case, some of the killer's squalid *why* can be explained by personal inadequacies and, almost certainly, severe psychological problems, but to dismiss Bouyeri as Lee Harvey Oswald on a prayer mat is to miss the point. Buruma knows this perfectly well. He chooses to stress the unhappiness of the "immigrant" (Bouyeri is Dutch-born) marooned in a country where he will always be considered an alien. Fair enough, but it's only part of the story.

Buruma has far less to say about the extent to which the Dutch themselves (or, more precisely, the Dutch elite) dug van Gogh's grave. After all, these were the people who as a result of political correctness, indifference, and complacency did nothing to combat Islamic extremism. Not only that, but they went out of their way to vilify those who were prepared to do so (check out how Pim Fortuyn and van Gogh were described both before and *after* their murders). These people have spent decades denigrating their own history, their own culture, and their own traditions; to them, nationalism was among the gravest of sins. No wonder Bouyeri was unimpressed.

Buruma is too smart, and too honest, an observer to ignore these issues altogether, but his reluctance to spend much time on them shows that he has not moved as far from the attitudes of *bien-pensant* Holland as he would like us to think. Readers will look in vain for much sympathy for the ethnic Dutch, citizens of a state turned upside down with little discussion and less consent (raising these issues was "racist," "Islamophobic," choose your bogeyword)—omissions that go some way toward explaining why integration has been such a failure.

It's also pretty clear that the author of *Murder in Amsterdam*, like so many other secular Europeans, has little idea of quite how dangerous truly fundamentalist religion can be. It's telling that Buruma can find time to grumble that "conservatives" have appropriated the idea of the Enlightenment as a last redoubt from which they can defend their (presumably reprehensible) values. That's a shot that's not only cheap but also aimed at the wrong target. Standing up for reason is too important a task to be regarded as something reserved only for Europe's Left or, for that matter, its Right. It's going to be hard work and, yes, it may be a little uncomfortable at times: Café debates, ecumenical babble, and generous welfare payments won't be enough to do the trick. Voltaire would have understood this. So, I'm sure, does Buruma; he just can't face admitting it.

Holland's establishment consensus is so stifling that it ought to be no surprise that the most prominent dissidents have emerged from outside the mainstream: the immigrant, Ayaan Hirsi Ali (now in exile); the homosexual, Pim Fortuyn (murdered); and the clown, Theo van Gogh (murdered). It ought to be no surprise, but maybe to Buruma it is. To read his descriptions of all three is to detect a certain distancing, a touch of disapproval, and perhaps even a little distaste. They rocked the boat, you see, in a way that was not very Dutch, no, not at all. **NR**

OLD AGE

Youth is very sad. It sees the possibility
Of wrinkles coming. Even in Arcady, death stalks.
Old age, on the contrary, is happy. It says,
"Just think, I have today." Besides, Einstein's
Face, surrounded by its halo of white hair,
Grew more interestingly intricate with every year.
Every wrinkle wondered. Imagine
How fortunate to be the musician who, when he heard
He was going blind, exclaimed, "Great. Now
I'll have time to play all my records."

—MARY EWALD

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A Dandy Tory

Disraeli: The Victorian Dandy Who Became Prime Minister, by Christopher Hibbert (Palgrave Macmillan, 432 pp., $29.95)

DUNCAN CURRIE

THE story is told that when Daniel Patrick Moynihan worked in the Nixon White House he gave his boss a list of classic political biographies. Nixon was especially interested in Lord Robert Blake's treatment of Benjamin Disraeli. "You know very well," the president reportedly told Moynihan, "that it is the Tory men with liberal policies who have enlarged democracy." As he set about imposing wage and price controls, expanding affirmative action, and jacking up social spending to record levels, one wonders if Nixon had old "Dizzy" in mind.

But was he right about Disraeli? Was the flamboyant novelist-cum-politico really a "Tory man with liberal policies"? In a lengthy *Weekly Standard* essay, David Gelernter has argued that Disraeli was in fact "the inventor of modern conservatism"—in both Britain and the U.S. "Conservative thinking dates to the dawn of organized society," says Gelernter, "but modern conservatism—a mass movement, a philosophy not for aristocrats and the rich but for everybody—was Disraeli's creation."

Others use Disraeli as a cudgel to flay Baroness Thatcher. "Thatcherism was anything but a Tory creed in the true sense: It was warmed up laissez-faire liberalism," wrote *Financial Times* columnist Michael Prowse a few years ago. "The Conservatives dominated 20th-century British politics not because of their commitment to markets but because Disraeli, their great 19th-century leader, positioned them as a party that could credibly claim to care about the whole nation: the poor as well as the rich."

As Tories and Republicans ponder their raison d'être, the time is ripe for a fresh appraisal of Disraeli. Few scholars are better suited to the task than Christopher Hibbert, an elder statesman of British letters whose previous works include a social history of England and a biography of Queen Victoria. His latest effort mines Disraeli's speeches, letters, diaries, and novels to produce a remarkably scrupulous and sophisticated study.

Yet readers should be warned: This is not a political history. Those seeking a more detailed intellectual analysis of Disraeli's "One Nation" Toryism, or of his link to modern U.S.-U.K. conservatism, should look elsewhere. Hibbert's chief aim is to illuminate Disraeli's private life and consider how it melded with his public one. The result is a book that, as its subtitle implies, tells us much about Disraeli the "dandy"—and Disraeli the author—but far less about Disraeli the prime minister.

Hibbert can write gracefully, but *Disraeli* suffers from a superfluity of quotation. It is often hard to keep track of just who or what is being cited, a problem made more acute by Hibbert's tendency to identify the speaker within brackets within the quote. Only the most feverish Disraeli buff will be able to slog through the endless block quotes that quickly become soporific.

Hibbert's book is, however, meticulously researched. How a financially insecure, garishly dressed novelist of Jewish ancestry, who tended to "live well beyond the means at his disposal," became leader of Imperial Britain—and of the Conservative party, no less—is one of the most unlikely political stories ever told. Disraeli, born in 1804, spent his early years in the literary world, battling bad reviews and depression and very nearly winding up in a debtors' prison. With his foppish clothes and sycophancy, he aspired to dazzle the London social scene, but anti-Semitism kept him out of many of the best clubs.

Though it is now fashionable to recall Disraeli as the principled paladin of "Tory democracy," it seems he entered politics devoid of any real ideology or notion of public service. "He felt drawn to Westminster," writes Hibbert, "by ambition and vanity, the desire for fame, the need to make himself remarkable." Believing that Toryism was "worn out," he initially stood for office as a Radical. "The world will wonder at my ambition," Disraeli wrote after his first defeat. "Alas, I struggle from Pride. Yes! It is Pride that now prompts me, not Ambition. They shall not say I have failed."

Disraeli spent his early years in the literary world, battling bad reviews and depression and very nearly winding up in a debtors' prison.

In 1837 he was finally elected to Parliament as a "reforming" Tory, having switched parties for a mix of reasons. His critics smelled rank opportunism, as they would throughout his career. Disraeli's big moment came in 1846, when he broke with Prime Minister Robert Peel over the protectionist Corn Laws—Disraeli still favored them—and split the Conservative party. From that point virtually until his death in 1881, Disraeli dominated Tory Britain.

He became the "hero of the party" in 1867, with passage of a Reform Bill that extended voting rights to a broader swath of the working class. But were his motives wholly idealistic? As always there was more than a bit of self-interest at play. "Disraeli's attitude towards Reform had been largely dictated by his determination to force the Whigs out of office," explains Hibbert. "It was now largely dictated by a determination to stay in office himself."

The plan worked. Disraeli went on to serve two terms as prime minister. The

Mr. Currie is a reporter at *The Weekly Standard*.

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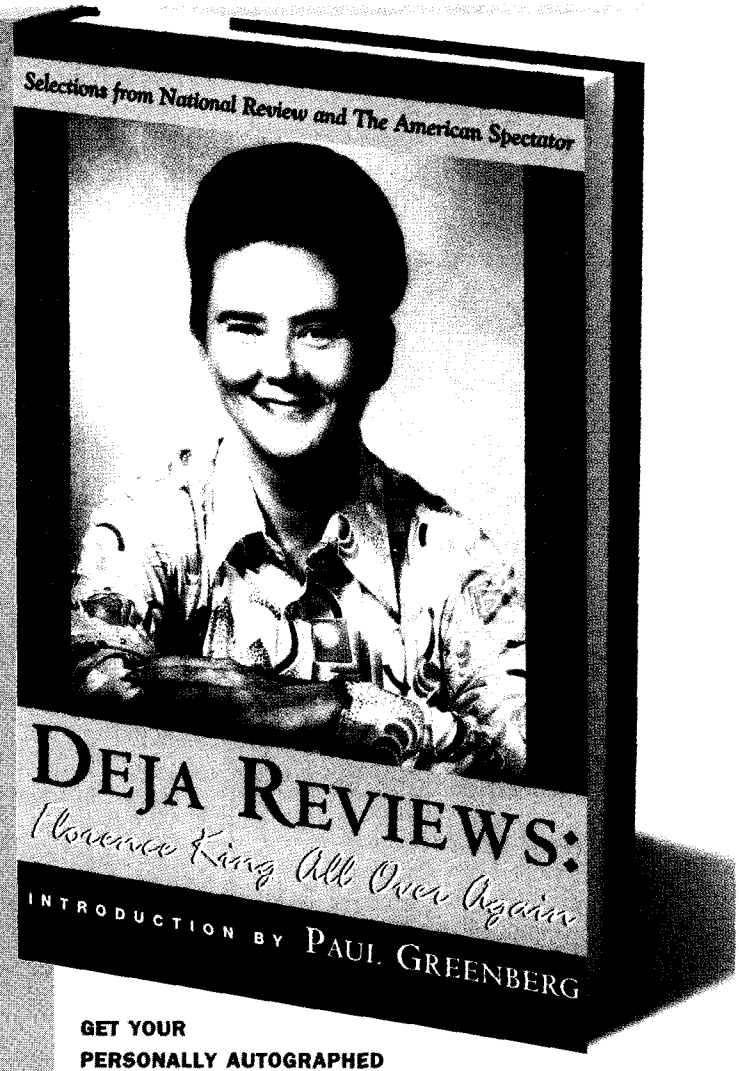
> Back in the Cold War, whenever I had to review an unreadable book, I always comforted myself with the thought, 'Maybe the Russians will drop the Bomb and I won't have to finish reading this.' Those were the days. This time, stuck with *A Pilgrim's Way: The Personal Story of the Episcopal Bishop Charged with Heresy for Ordaining a Gay Man Who Was in a Committed Relationship*, by the Rt. Rev. Walter C. Righter, author of the longest subtitle in publishing history, all I could hope for was an asteroid.

Boy, can she *write!* And as for asteroids, you'll wish you'd been struck by one if you don't take advantage of this special pre-publication offer. Order your copies today of *Deja Reviews: Florence King All Over Again* for only $24.95 each, direct from *NR* (they won't be in bookstores till 2007!). They'll be shipped to you—free of charge! And for a limited time we're offering autographed copies of *Deja Reviews* for only $34.95. To get your Florence-signed copies (they'll make great gifts for curmudgeon fans!), check the appropriate box on the order coupon and include on a separate sheet how and to whom you want your books inscribed.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first lasted less than a year in 1868; the second stretched from 1874 to 1880, during which time he ascended to the House of Lords. The second Disraeli government passed a slew of paternalistic social legislation, including a Public Health Act, a Pure Food and Drugs Act, an Education Act, and a Factory Act.

In foreign affairs, Disraeli was staunchly pro-empire but also a realist. He loathed the moralism of Liberal party chief William Gladstone, his fierce rival, and opposed the Crimean War, deeming it "unnecessary." In 1875 he purchased a controlling interest for Britain in the Suez Canal; the next year he made Queen Victoria "Empress of India." But his diplomatic apotheosis came at the 1878 Congress of Berlin, where he displayed such a shrewd knack for power politics that Bismarck declared, "*Der alte Jude, das ist der Mann!*" ("The old Jew, that is the man!"). Disraeli brought back "peace with honor," as he put it, having curbed Russian influence in the Balkans and also acquired Cyprus.

Whatever his many faults—the egotism, the posturing, the self-pity—Disraeli must rank among the finest orators in the Western tradition. He was as vicious to his enemies (such as Irish MP Daniel O'Connell) as he was flattering to his superiors (such as Queen Victoria). His mystical idealism sprang partly from his Jewish background, which Disraeli saw as an aristocratic lineage. ("England is the Israel of his imagination," remarked one observer.)

As for his philosophy, it owed much to the Young England movement, which sought to forge a closer bond between landed elites and common laborers. This theme comes through in several of Disraeli's novels. He cared deeply about poverty, but never quite trusted the middle classes. Like most Tory patricians, he eschewed Liberal free-market policies.

Casting Disraeli as the progenitor of Thatcher- and Reagan-style conservatism thus misses the mark. His closest American counterpart might be Teddy Roosevelt. Like TR, Disraeli nimbly blended romantic nationalism with progressive populism, offering social reform to his party's Left and liberal imperialism to its Right. In today's curious parlance, we might call Dizzy a "big-government conservative."

What his complicated life ultimately shows—and this may have attracted Richard Nixon—is that personal failures need not doom a politician so long as his core ideas retain their saliency with the general public. In the end Disraeli became a transformational leader because, after 1846, his "rational and realistic policy" of Tory democracy at home and British greatness abroad struck a chord.

Again, we should not confuse the economics of Disraeli-brand conservatism with the classical liberalism preached by Thatcher (whose legacy on free markets owes more to Gladstone than to Disraeli). But there is no question that Disraeli made Toryism a popular doctrine. Above all, he trusted that, despite its warts, Britain was fundamentally a force for good in the world. That last point is something the current Tory leaders, who seem intent on railing against "neoconservatism," would do well to keep in mind. **NR**

LEGACY

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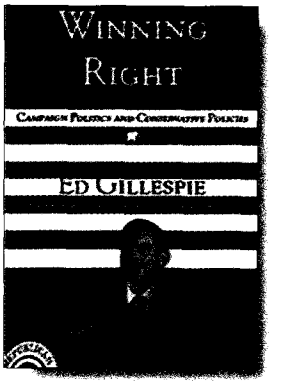

Winning Right: Campaign Politics and Conservative Policies, by Ed Gillespie (Threshold, 304 pp., $26)

ALSTON B. RAMSAY

For wits, there is no lower-hanging fruit than politics. Consider H. L. Mencken: "A national political campaign is better than the best circus ever heard of, with a mass baptism and a couple of hangings thrown in." Or Aesop: "We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office." And behind every great thief, it is said, there is a team working behind the curtains, the consiglieri who prepare the holy water and tie the nooses. They feed in the shadows—eating, breathing, sleeping, dreaming politics. They work with feverish intensity to assassinate the character of anyone in their way. Their souls are black and withered.

Or so goes popular imagination. The best political operatives, on the contrary, often possess the same qualities that make a good wit: a trenchant mind and a levity of spirit. Ed Gillespie—once Senate parking-lot attendant, later RNC chairman and strategist to senators and presidents—has those qualities in spades. And they come through in his new book, *Winning Right*.

Mr. Ramsay is a speechwriter for the secretary of defense. The views expressed are his own.

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Considering that Ed Gillespie had an inside seat on the 2000 and 2004 Bush campaigns, one might expect this book to be chockablock with scuttlebutt and innuendo. Thankfully, Ed Gillespie is not Bob Woodward. But his refusal to air dirty laundry is not as great a disappointment as one might at first expect. Gillespie is open and candid. When he talks about the strategies of campaigns past, he does not shroud his prose in mystery—for, to be truthful, there *is* little mystery. The seedy underbelly of politics is, like the image of sinister political hackdom, more myth than reality.

Politicos are artists of the real, who must cope with matters as they find them. For example, when Gillespie was working on the 2000 Bush campaign, the strategists thought voters saw Gore as "arrogant" and "elitist." Polls, however, told a different story, which Gillespie explained to a colleague with typical aplomb: "They don't think Gore's a jerk, they think he's a sissy." And so was born Gore the consummate flip-flopper. Here Gillespie inserts one of his "lessons learned": "What professionals have to guard against is seeing what they believe." (Another lesson has to do with the merit of ideologues and political extremes: "You can't split the difference until you first define it.")

If there's one overriding problem with the book, it's that it tries to do too many things. Gillespie has set out to write a political-strategy guidebook, a personal biography, a preview of the 2006 election, a policy paper on health care—all of which leads occasionally to an organizational muddle. But each of the book's various aspects can be interesting in its own way (except, perhaps, for the section on health-care policy, which I found to be an effective cure for insomnia). You simply cannot find a more knowledgeable Washington insider—and you'd be hard-pressed to find one more personable. "Any decent press secretary can get his boss into the paper," he writes, "but it takes a really good one to keep him out sometimes."

The book's most gratifying moments come in the anecdotes interspersed throughout—some hilarious and some instructive. There is the episode when Gillespie, on his first day as press secretary for a freshman Dick Armey, had to explain why his boss was the lone congressman to vote against a bill to reward whistleblowers. It turns out, also, that Gillespie actually likes former Democratic chairman Terry McAuliffe. And, throughout *Winning Right*, Gillespie offers detailed synopses of various campaigns: useful knowledge for both political junkies and campaign employees.

You may not, however, find much that challenges conventional wisdom, for in some respects Ed Gillespie was the author of said conventional wisdom. Looking back on any election, the strategists and the media tend to pick and choose specific elements of a campaign that create a linear story, leading inexorably to victory for one candidate, defeat for the other. The reality, on the other hand, is far more complex. Campaigns are determined by millions of individual choices, the process atomized to the point where it is impossible to pin the blame—or praise—on any one incident, whether it is an error of strategy or a gaffe on the campaign trail.

That, of course, is why you hire competent strategists and campaign managers: to minimize your mistakes, to gain more traction from your strengths, to expose your opponent's weaknesses—ultimately, to get all the small breaks that eventually add up to victory.

That is also why you hire Ed Gillespie. **NR**

Making History

Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography, by David S. Brown
(Chicago, 320 pp., $27.50)

WILLIAM J. GRIBBIN

FROM the publication in 1944 of his doctoral dissertation as the classic *Social Darwinism in American Thought, 1860–1915*, to his death from leukemia at age 54 in 1970, Richard Hofstadter was one of America's foremost public intellectuals. Even today, his landmark work, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It*, sells 10,000 copies a year (though one suspects much of that number is owing to high-school and college course requirements, the way in which, almost a half century ago, I was indoctrinated in it). His extraordinary intellectual influence, both

Mr. Gribbin was a senior White House staffer in the Reagan and George H. W. Bush administrations. He is the author of *The Churches Militant: The War of 1812 and American Religion*.

■ BOOKS IN BRIEF ■

A Glorious Disaster: Barry Goldwater's Presidential Campaign and the Origins of the Conservative Movement, by J. William Middendorf II
(Basic, 303 pp., $26.95)

A BRACING and informative book, taking us through the gestation of the Goldwater-for-president movement and the campaign itself, and giving us chapters on the succession in the leadership of the Republican National Committee. The author, who writes fluently and gives us close-in details of the candidate at his best and at his not-so-good, was named treasurer of the campaign, and notwithstanding the ignominious defeat of 1964, became the treasurer of the GOP. He aspired to be secretary of the Navy, but President Nixon, having agreed, gave it to another coadjutor and Middendorf went forth (happily) as ambassador to the Netherlands. From the beginning of his political life, he was an earnest and influential conservative advocate. He does justice to the signal contributions of Jerry Milbank, Peter O'Donnell, and Bill Rusher, and gives us with a mortician's eye an account of what went wrong in a bollixed campaign—one feature of which was the exclusion of NATIONAL REVIEWers from active roles, casualties of a Goldwater turfmeister (he names the culprit). An eminently readable book about a mythogenic American figure, political godfather of a movement that is with us yet, or so NATIONAL REVIEW contends.

—WFB

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in his own time and today, calls for a biography as meticulous and analytical as this volume by David S. Brown.

Which is not to say that this is a candidate for most conservatives' libraries. Hofstadter was always a man of the Left, from his early four-month sojourn with the Communist party in the 1930s through the various permutations of his liberalism. Indeed, Goldwater's candidacy in 1964 was enough to convince him that America was "visibly sick," and he later provoked outrage by joking that conservatives should be put into mental hospitals. It may be only natural that his biographer would share the same general inclination. But what are we to make of some of Brown's phrases—"the authoritarian roots of WASP behavior," "age of American and Soviet expansion"? Observe, also, the linkage in "the Moscow trials, the Holocaust, or McCarthyism."

The shadow of Joe McCarthy hangs heavily over this volume, as it apparently did over the mind of Hofstadter himself. And why would anyone, in mentioning atheistic Communism, put the modifying adjective in quotation marks, as if to suggest there was some doubt about the matter? But let Brown speak for himself: "Perhaps there is something at the core of American conservatism that is erratic, emotional, and receptive to the moral absolutism and prosperity theology celebrated by Pentecostals and free marketers." Apart from the rest of that remarkable sentence, the misuse of the label "Pentecostal" is of a piece with Brown's misuse of "antinomian Christianity" and "evangelical" and, for that matter, Hofstadter's misuse of "fundamentalism."

As was the case with Hofstadter, Brown's range of vision is narrowed by slogans masquerading as political science: The Far Right and Radical Right seem to have encompassed anyone less liberal than Nelson Rockefeller, who, by the way, was Hofstadter's idea of a responsible Republican. Because Hofstadter, in the 1960s, penned an article on "The New American Right," Brown freely applies the term "New Right" to conservatives way back then. Was there no one in his college's poli-sci department who could tell him that, for the last three decades, that label has had a very specific contemporary meaning, and not just among conservatives: a meaning that has nothing to do with the people or the era in which Hofstadter lived?

To Brown's credit, he is informative about his subject's quirks and shortcomings. We learn of Hofstadter's youthful wish to join Mississippi sharecroppers at their labor; Brown skewers this desire as "sharecropping as an introduction to the science of socialism." Brown recounts Hofstadter's negative view of his Italian-American students and his contempt for America's denominational colleges. As an instructor, he was no Mr. Chips; he once terminated a course prematurely because his teaching had consisted of merely reading his current manuscript—and he had finished it. "I'm not a teacher," he once said, "I'm a writer."

Brown is also admirably candid in discussing Hofstadter's aversion to doing the work most historians think is their central duty: the investigation and analysis of primary sources. Hofstadter referred to them as "archive rats." That attitude not only brought him academic criticism; it distorted his own writing. Here's one example from my personal experience. In his anti-populist, anti-conservative manifesto, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, his first subjects are the hyperventilating anti-Masons of upstate New York in the 1830s. If Hofstadter had bothered to immerse himself in the popular literature of that era, or if he had ever rummaged in the Library of Congress's collection of handbills, broadsides, and political tracts of the time, he would have had to conclude that either everyone in the country exemplified the same paranoid style, or that no one did. But Hofstadter rarely visited the nation's central library during the three years he taught at the nearby University of Maryland.

More than anyone else, Hofstadter exemplified and legitimated the melding of history with the social sciences, especially psychology, and he used the new hybrid as a weapon. William F. Buckley Jr. memorably observed that Hofstadter analyzed liberalism but diagnosed conservatism. Again to his credit, Brown refers to the "thinly concealed elitism" of 1950s social science. One of Hofstadter's admiring students noted that the professor "could not conceal his disdain for the hopelessly muddled thinking of ordinary Americans." Hofstadter's corrective response to the public's shortcomings was to explain the past as a way of influencing public policy.

Like almost all his peers among postwar historians, he really believed that their Left-Liberalism was to be, now and forever, the "center" of a great American consensus. Hence his, and their, stunned reaction when both the New Left and the resurgent Right of the 1960s rejected the establishment academicians' self-satisfied consensus. By the end of his life, he anticipated with foreboding a "radical right" reaction that would bring all sorts of horrors upon this country. He did not live to see the Reagan Reign of Terror.

Brown's book is marred by typos, but at least he writes in a language alien to much of today's professoriate—intelligent English, with occasional memorable phrases, as when he describes Hofstadter's flawed and magisterial *The Age of Reform* as "history without the safety net of economic causation." Unlike his subject, Brown is an "archive rat," and he is a master of detail. More important, he can observe, with fairness, that "liberals, when faced with a stiff political challenge, manifested the symptoms of their own paranoid style." One can therefore hope that his future research will give him what escaped Richard Hofstadter: an accurate understanding of the conservative movement in the second half of the 20th century. **NR**

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■ FILM ■

A Misfit

ROSS DOUTHAT

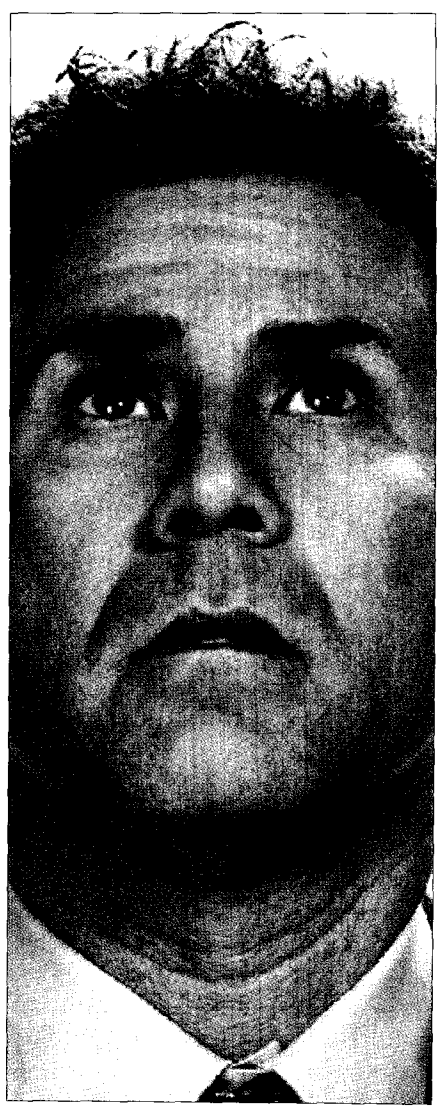
Ours is an age of big-man comedy—of giant doofuses, six-foot-plus oafs with bobbing, oversized heads, who thrive on a devastating combination of size and silliness. In the 1980s, this was Bill Murray's métier; now it belongs to Vince Vaughn, to Sacha Baron Cohen of *Borat* fame, and of course to Will Ferrell, the funniest big man of them all.

Ferrell is the archetypal innocent American: a giddy man-child, sweet and vulgar all at once, klutzing his way through life and spreading well-meaning chaos in his wake. In his *Saturday Night Live* days, he effortlessly parodied the tongue-tied side of George W. Bush; since then, he's taken on all the clichés of American masculinity, from overgrown frat boys and '70s newscasters to NASCAR drivers and soccer dads, skewering them and celebrating them in equal measure.

There is something in a comedian, though, that pines always for respectability, for critical acclaim and Oscar statuettes. Sometimes this pining is fulfilled—think of Murray, who's aged into a critical darling by playing variations on a melancholic theme, or Tom Hanks, who made an effortless leap from comic goof to Jimmy Stewart II. Sometimes it's painful to watch—consider the last 15 years of Robin Williams movies, or better, don't. But more often it produces results that are slightly odd, and slightly disappointing; the comedian is *okay* playing dramatic roles, hitting his marks with the steady competence of a talented child actor, but the audience is left to wonder why someone so hilarious is stuck playing a straight man.

This has been the fate of Jim Carrey and Adam Sandler; now it's Ferrell's fate as well. *Stranger Than Fiction*, in which Ferrell plays Harold Crick, an IRS auditor with the voice of Emma Thompson in his head, isn't strictly a drama—it's more a high-concept dramedy, built to deliver wry chuckles rather than belly laughs, mixing pithy one-liners with existential angst. But it requires its star to eschew everything that makes him such a joy to watch—his ebullience and his flailing physicality, his boastful, macho posturing—in favor of an introverted minimalism.

Ferrell's Crick is mild-mannered and meticulous; he counts his toothbrush strokes and does long division in his head, while shuttling between a cubicle and a lonely, featureless apartment. He comes out of his shell eventually, as the audience knows he must, but even his transformation remains understated and underplayed, with none of the wacky, giddy, bull-in-a-china-shop qualities that usually make Ferrell impossible *not* to watch. It's not a bad performance, exactly, but it's a poor use of his gifts—like hiring William Hurt to play the lead in *Animal House*.



SONY PICTURES

Will Ferrell in Stranger Than Fiction

Stranger Than Fiction's conceit is that the voice in Crick's head belongs to Kay Eiffel, a morbid, chain-smoking novelist (played with Eeyore-esque charm by Thompson) who happens to be writing a novel about, well, Harold Crick, without knowing that her protagonist is real. Her voice narrates Crick's life as it happens to him—"accurately, and with a better vocabulary," he tells a baffled shrink—and then goes a step farther: "Little did he know," Eiffel intones, while Crick awaits his morning bus, "that events had been set in motion that would lead to his death."

This bulletin, of course, turns out to be just the jolt that the taxman needs to turn his life around. In short order, he's learned to play the guitar, sought out literary counsel—from Dustin Hoffman, as a cheery academic who helps Crick figure out what kind of novel he's inhabiting—and fallen in love with the fetching left-wing baker (Maggie Gyllenhaal) he's assigned to audit. Meanwhile, Eiffel is suffering from a case of writer's block so acute that her publishers have dispatched an assistant—Queen Latifah, surprisingly flat in an underwritten part—to help her finish her story, and finish off Harold Crick.

Inevitably, life and art intersect, and Crick hunts down Eiffel just as she's about to kill him with a keystroke, raising various significant questions about reality and imagination, the good life and the good death, the novelist as God and God as a novelist. They're never answered, though: *Stranger Than Fiction* dabbles in profundity but settles for whimsy, a self-conscious cuteness that charms but doesn't quite satisfy.

The movie has a great deal going for it. Marc Forster, the director, mixes visual quirks with intimate set-pieces; Hoffman and Thompson inhabit their roles with the easy class of old pros; Gyllenhaal successfully defends her title as the sexiest plain woman in Hollywood; and Zach Helm's Charlie Kaufman–lite script offers enough moments of deadpan drollery to make the whole thing worthwhile. Yet I would have given it all up, I think, for a chance to watch Ferrell's nebbish-with-a-heart-of-gold chug a few beers, strip down to his skivvies, and bellow, as he did in *Old School*: "We're going *streaking*!" **NR**

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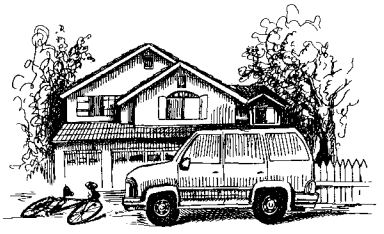
■ THE STRAGGLER ■

Evergreen Elsinore



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

READING Andrew Sullivan's new book *The Conservative Soul* (reviewed in the last issue of NR by Jonah Goldberg), I was interested to see that Andrew, when in high school, acted in a performance of *Hamlet*. He played one of the minor roles, the foppish courtier Osric, who shows up in the play's last act to tell Hamlet of Laertes's challenge, and to serve as the target of some unkind quips by Hamlet and Horatio. Andrew goes on to use the play as a starting point for reflections on the incompleteness and transience of our understanding: "Over four decades, I changed, and the play changed. . . . each experience is a kind of mystery. . . . If this is true of a play, how much truer is it of life itself?"

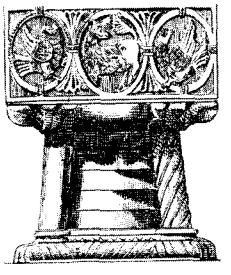
These passages stirred up some guilt about my own lack of acquaintance with Shakespeare's tremendous masterpiece, all the more inexcusable because I have a DVD of it on my shelf: the 1980 BBC production, with Derek Jacobi as Hamlet, Patrick Stewart as the king, and Claire Bloom—still stunning at age 49—as Gertrude.

Not that I am unacquainted with *Hamlet*. Nobody who has had anything like a decent education can arrive at middle age without having seen at least a handful of *Hamlet*s. I saw, but did not act in, a performance at my own school, sensationally glamorous to us freshmen because a real fencing master had been brought in to coach the senior boys playing Hamlet and Laertes. At college I caught the fine Soviet 1963 movie, of which the thing I most clearly recall is the peal of round, fat, gloomy Slavonic phonemes rolled out by Innokenti Smoktunovsky's prince in reply to Polonius's inquiry about his reading matter: *slo-VAA, slo-VAA, slo-VAA*. I suppose I have seen three or four performances since, as one does in the course of life.

Partly from idle curiosity, but mainly from a desire to avoid a tiresome work chore I really should have been busy with—which is to say, in a spirit of true Hamletian procrastination!—I pulled out the DVD and sat with some cookies and a pot of coffee to watch it. There went my day.

It is of course impossible to say anything about *Hamlet* that has not already been said. I amused and flattered myself by noticing things I had missed before, or forgotten, but this little pleasure is dulled by the knowledge that someone, somewhere, has written a Ph.D. thesis on every point, and that a hundred other things I shall never notice have been similarly worked over by the scholars, revealing wonders of art and understanding I shall never know. This is fine old wine, its subtleties mostly wasted on a mere dinner-table tippler. (The Straggler household's *vin de table* actually comes in a large cardboard box.)

Nor was my viewing strategy ideal. *Hamlet* is a famously long play—the BBC production runs three and a half hours. To watch a recorded *Hamlet* on a device with a pause button, while sitting in one's study, surrounded by reference books, with the Internet a few keystrokes away, takes much longer than the listed performance length. The temptations to explore are just too great. Was Shakespeare the first person to note that "dog will have his day"? (No, says an Internet source, the phrase was proverbial at least as far back as Plutarch.)



Without stirring from my chair I can find out how many movie and TV versions of the play have been made (62), read C. S. Lewis's famous essay, "*Hamlet*—The Prince or the Poem," and debunk a tale that was going round in my schooldays and that I went on believing up to a few hours ago: that "I am thy father's spirit" translates into Dutch as *Ik ben din papas spook*. According to the most reliable online translation website—which, to be sure, is only a tad more reliable than schoolboy folklore—the correct Dutch would be *Ik ben het spook van uw vader*.

Hyperlinks are the great timewaster. The sight of Ophelia brought to my mind a theatrical anecdote told of the great 19th-century actor-manager Beerbohm Tree. When a playgoer approached Tree after a performance of *Hamlet* to ask whether the prince sleeps with Ophelia, Tree is said to have replied: "Invariably, in my experience."

Curious about Tree's curious name, I looked him up on Wikipedia. There I learned that Tree was the illegitimate grandparent of the late English actor and hellraiser Oliver Reed, one whole section of whose Wikipedia entry is headed "Drinking and Death." Shakespeare would have smiled at that. (Of Reed's passing in 1999, Wikipedia reports: "He died suddenly from a heart attack . . . reportedly after drinking three bottles of rum and beating five sailors at arm wrestling.") One wants to press on further, but while it is tempting to lose an hour or so surfing the hyperlinks, as Horatio cautioned Hamlet, "'Twere to consider too curiously."

At last there is the play itself, ever fresh, ever fascinating, one of the greatest of all productions of the human imagination. It is of course about death—more exactly, about the soap-bubble-thin yet opaque membrane that separates this place from the other. And Hamlet is of course us, all of us, each of us—a mirror. Peter Saccio, in one of his Teaching Company lectures, pauses to remark that he, Saccio, a literary critic who spends his working days among students, has been describing Hamlet as a literary critic and a college student.

Caught up with Hamlet and his hesitations, I found myself thinking of the thing not done. Does everybody have a thing not done? Perhaps not. I have one, and think of it daily—hourly, at dark times. For most of us, the thing not done is far better left undone, carried in silence to the other place; but Hamlet's is too imperative. After trying to keep his doubt alive by feeding it all the learning of the ages, and the new understandings of his own time, he goes and *does* the thing not done, taking us with him to the edge of the world.

I think I shall put *Hamlet* back on the shelf for a while, a long while. **NR**

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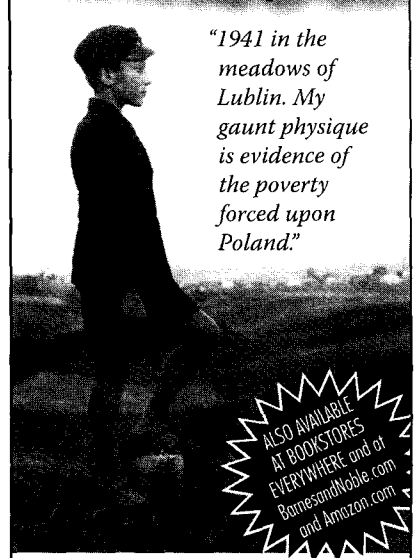
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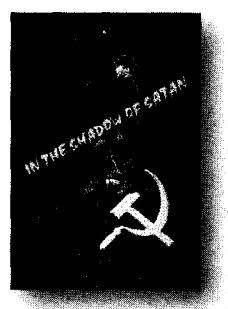

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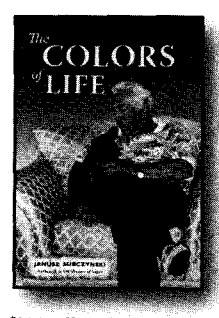

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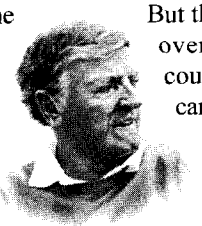
WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Gay Impasse

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 27

THE New Jersey court has simply brought the gay-marriage issue one step forward in its ineluctable march to the Supreme Court—or to a constitutional amendment.

The New Jersey majority did a very cool thing politically. It reasoned as follows: 1) If people are gay, they do not therefore forfeit rights, never mind that these rights were specifically written for non-gays. 2) Therefore, we hereby promulgate the right of marriage for New Jersey gays. Same-sex unions are, effective immediately, to have the identical rights and privileges that are given by New Jersey to man-woman unions, including tax benefits. 3) However, we acknowledge that the word "marriage" attaches by tradition to unions between members of different sexes. That tradition has been respected by the legislature, and therefore the legislature should have the responsibility of remedying the extant disparity. We cede to the legislature 180 days in which to engage this issue. After that, the question may very well come back to the courts to settle.



There is a ton of interventionist mischief in this ruling. But begin at the beginning.

Legislatures are entitled to concern themselves with social questions. At what age should people be permitted to vote? At what age to claim old-age benefits?

Now, decisions on such questions as these get modified if the petitioner can point to illegal discrimination by lawmakers, either intentional or unintentional. The central question raised three years ago in Massachusetts and adjudicated by the courts had to do with discrimination against gays.

Social policy throughout the United States has evolved from the conviction that unions between men and women bring forth welcome fruits, primarily the children who become citizen-successors and provide for the continuation of the state. In terms of civil status, such a union is—and is called—marriage. A marriage has derivative rights and responsibilities, including child care.

The gay lobby seeks to neutralize those special inducements to marriage. But something more than equivalent tax accommodations is sought. The lobby wishes that unions between gays be treated under the law as "marriages." It is not absolutely plain whether what is being sought is much more than a terminological promotion, from "union" to "marriage." If gay unions succeed in acquiring such rights as married couples now have, then they will be acquiring not only rights but responsibilities, including responsibilities toward their partners. It is not difficult to divorce nowadays, for instance, but it is harder to do than simply to file a change of address, whereas members of gay unions at present can separate without recourse to law. It will require a generation of adjustments, assuming that the courts in Massachusetts and New Jersey prevail in this, to know exactly what will be won or lost.

But the commotion at the moment is over the nominal point: Can the courts pronounce that a marriage can be entered into by members of the same sex?

It was immediately understood, after the 2003 ruling of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in *Goodridge* v. *Department of Public Health*, that a solution embodying the popular will may need to be achieved through a constitutional amendment. The same arguments that prevailed early in the week in New Jersey will certainly be used in arguing before the Supreme Court. And that court is certain to confront, some time soon ahead, the question whether individual rights extend to the right of gay persons to contract a "marriage" as defined by law and common practice.

President Bush has acknowledged the implications of the New Jersey ruling, and the fever that built up three years ago is reignited. There are men and women in America who have no designs to limit the movements of gay Americans, but who believe that notwithstanding this, there are sanctuaries that are naturally, and organically, reserved for traditional arrangements between men and women. There is something ranging between innocent frustration and raw fury over the proposition that a society of equal rights is required to disregard those characteristics that make up a married couple. Mr. Bush may elect to launch a movement for a clarification of the Constitution.

Who is Being Smuttier?

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 31

THE charge by assorted gentry that James Webb is not qualified to serve as a United States senator because there are lewdnesses in his published fiction rattles one's faith in democracy.

A few questions need to be examined, beginning with the primary charge: smutty passages in Webb's fiction.

I have no plans to run for senator from Connecticut, but if I did I suppose my opponent could make such charges as James Webb is confronting, citing passages from my 18 novels. Both of us dwell in high-church elevation. Webb, because he wishes a seat in the Senate. I, because I have been the editor of a conservative journal of opinion which speaks out on moral questions.

James Webb's principal defense has been that in his novels he writes about war and the military. And he saw these at first hand. One former naval officer wrote in to say, "Anyone who writes sex-free military fiction either doesn't know what he's talking about or doesn't have the guts to write the truth. These passages prove nothing except that Webb writes the military as he knew it, warts and all. It doesn't mean he approves of all the things he writes about (whether or not he ever did); he's certainly not the same guy now that he was when a midshipman or a second lieutenant."

Anther commentator wrote, "I hate to break it to you folks, but the military—especially the Marine Corps, the service

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that Webb knows best—is largely composed of macho young men with foul mouths and an unhealthy obsession with all things sexual. . . . If I wrote a book that involved some junior Marine officers deployed to Spain, and if I were as brutally honest as Webb is, I might write a scene in which the characters watch a live sex show. More than once. Because that's what my fellow lieutenants and I did when we were deployed to Spain. Am I proud of it? Not especially. But it happened—and it was by no means unusual."

More generally, the novelist writes to explore the human being. One did not need to await Freud to discern that the sexual drive is, if not the dominant impulse in human nature, at least a subdominant, making way for love, family, political allegiances, vocations, patriotism, and treachery. In order to illustrate these human drives it is required that authors explore manifestations of sexual interest, and these involve scenes and thoughts that inform us, whether we are reading *Romeo and Juliet* or *The Merchant of Venice*.

Now these disclaimers do not excuse violations of taste. But critics are there as full-time posses to hunt down aggressors in fiction. In politics, aggression at every conceivable level is positively workaday. No sex scene begins to rival dank exposés of human behavior when tempted to debauch not at brothels, but at polling places. Sen. George Allen, who has subscribed to the criticism of the fiction of his opponent, Mr. Webb, has to know these truths. To begin with he knows that to have written a sex scene in a piece of fiction is not as dangerous to a person's character as is competing for public office. At a practical level, Sen. John McCain, than whom no one is better qualified to judge war and writers who describe war, commented about one of Webb's novels, "It captures well the lingering scars of the war. A novel of revenge and redemption that tells us much about both where Vietnam is headed and where it has been."

Some say that the mere publication of smutty, erotic, realistic passages from Webb's fiction will undermine his claim to credentials to serve in the Senate. There are many reasons to vote for the Republican incumbent, but anyone who votes for him in protest against Webb's fiction needs to—grow up.

The Lieberman Question

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 3

A NEWSMAN pressed me a couple of days ago on the matter of the Senate election in Connecticut. Whom would I vote for? That's an improper question, as we all know: that's why voting is done in private. But I had been noisy on the subject of Joe Lieberman and could hardly plead the superordination of privacy. So I said, "Lieberman." And he said, Why? And I said, "I like Lieberman"; and politely declined amplification.

Years ago I argued in favor of Al Lowenstein, a prominent New York liberal, for Congress, and received the same bemused interrogation from the press. On that occasion I said simply that I was defying my principled opposition to many of Lowenstein's positions in order to vote for a human being I thought superior. On the matter of Lieberman, there is more there than a personal attraction to the individual. Republican candidate Alan Schlesinger commented on my choice, "I think it's ironic that anyone as conservative as Bill Buckley would help someone as liberal as Joe Lieberman." But Schlesinger misses the point.

The important contention doesn't involve the GOP candidate. It is Lieberman vs. Ned Lamont, the other Democrat. And the political drama in Connecticut isn't just among the candidates. It has to do with the future of the Democratic party. And that future affects everyone.

What happened in this campaign was the materialization on August 8 of an ideological posse. Its mission was to punish a Democrat for the sin of backing President Bush in the Iraq war.

Now it gets a little complicated because there are many Americans who oppose the war as it has evolved. If you promise not to tell anybody, my own conviction is that if George Bush ever took to the bottle again, he might confide that he wishes he had never got into war in Iraq. I too wish he hadn't, but that's not because he was wrong in going in. He was moved by a conviction that Saddam Hussein was productively engaged in manufacturing weapons of mass destruction, that he was in league with a terrorist movement that threatened the Middle East, and that the United States needed to demonstrate its willingness to use its own resources to fight against incipient threats to regional and national security.

Lieberman agreed. He was hardly the only Democrat to back Bush in 2003, but his special prominence—he had, after all, been Al Gore's running mate in 2000—attracted attention to his continued backing of Bush on foreign policy. The especially sibilant Left set out to make the backing of Bush an excommunicable offense. So that when a pleasant and wealthy young man in Greenwich volunteered to head up the posse, he got the backing of the Democratic Left. And when the showdown came, the ideological avengers won the day. Lieberman was defeated in the Democratic primary.

This meant to the population at large that hard-bitten Democratic leftists were bidding for control of the party and had scored a huge victory in a critical exchange by defeating a three-term senator who once ran for vice president. The bigger they are . . . the harder they fall. So there was much rejoicing in the Jacobin camp when Lieberman lost. But almost immediately he announced that he would run as an independent. And this gave the dissenters in Connecticut—Democratic, Republican, and independent—an opportunity to vote against the execution of the prominent and effective incumbent, who has thought and acted in what he believed the national interest, never mind that the commander in chief was a Republican.

The features of the Democratic leadership are not yet set. The Left is eager to assert itself as the true heir of the Democratic tradition, even as in 1948, under the leadership of Henry Wallace, the Left attempted to take over the party of FDR and Truman. It failed, and may fail again. But much depends on how much life there is in the opposition, and the first challenge is to vote to retain Joe Lieberman in office.

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

Uncertain Trumpet

THERE are two George W. Bushes: There's the Bush of the global media, the swaggering Texan cowboy Zionist warmongering madman; and then there's the other Bush, the one of whom I wrote a couple years ago that 90 percent of the time he's "Tony Blair with a ranch."

In a stroke of strategic genius, both Bushes managed to get themselves defeated on November 7. The "security moms" and all the other features of the post-9/11 landscape vanished, wearied by a war that's dwindled down into a thankless semi-colonial policing operation with no end in sight. Democrats mostly see Iraq as Vietnam, quagmire, can't be won, etc., etc. Republicans are less homogeneous: Some agree with the Dems (indeed, some agree with the Ned Lamont Dems), some feel Iraq is merely an ill-advised and unnecessary entanglement, some feel there is no war. And the remaining percentage who say there is a war and they're in favor of it and it isn't Vietnam reckon the administration risks letting Democrats turn it into such by waging it too tentatively, not just in Iraq but against Syria and Iran, too. And with the war off the table, what's left on the GOP bill of fare is the Tony Blair–with–a–ranch stuff: big porked-up entitlement-crazed federal government blowing gazillions in health care, education, and every other area except the border-fencing budget that apparently would be a line item too far. A lot of Republican voters had stuck with Bush and the GOP Congress on the war despite grave misgivings about everything else. When they soured on the war, all that was left was the everything else.

Let me cite my own state: New Hampshire. Now, as I'm sure many readers will eagerly point out, New Hampshire is not the typical Republican state. But that's the kind of geographical write-off that doomed the Democrats throughout the Nineties: If you can't win atypical Republican states, get used to not winning, period. On November 7, the Granite State's entire House delegation—all two of them—flipped from red to blue. My own congressman, Charlie Bass, was mostly a RINO squish. At Republican meetings up here, disaffected members would cite some survey purporting to show he had a less conservative voting record than Bernie Sanders. I've never seen the actual survey: It may be apocryphal, like the Rosie O'Donnell line in *Sleepless in Seattle* about the 40-year-old single woman having more chance of being killed by terrorists than getting married. But anyway I can't say I'll miss Charlie's votes. However, his colleague Jeb Bradley was a much sounder fellow, and he had no idea of the tsunami about to engulf him until late on Election Day. It wasn't just the base staying home. It was also a particular strain of New Hampshire voter instinctively deciding (a) I'm no longer for the war but (b) I am in favor of fiscal discipline.

After November 7, it's not clear that either party wants to win in Iraq.

In other words, the GOP has managed to wind up the precise inversion of what it's looking for. In Vermont on Election Day, I happened to find myself behind a granolamobile bearing the bumper sticker "WAR IS TERRORISM WITH A BIGGER BUDGET." If enough folks genuinely believe that, then this nation is doomed. But it seems to me a significant sliver of the GOP vote has accepted, if not the moral argument, then the fiscal one—that a dubious war has provided cover for a massive overspend. If you'll forgive a very rough generalization, the Granite State electorate was divided between liberals who regard the war as an immoral, illegal, lyin'-neocon racket and want more attention given to soccer-mommy issues, and libertarians and fiscal conservatives who regard the war as an irrelevance or distraction and want to keep more of their money. The present Republican party is in danger of finding itself without any constituency in New Hampshire.

My worry is that there's now a political logic pushing both parties toward a bipartisan alliance of Democratic defeatism and Republican realism. Okay, make that "realism." To be sure, we shoulda done this and we shoulda done that. And some of those arguments are worth having, if you're interested in the best path to victory. But it's not clear to me, after November 7, that either party is. Since Day One, the Dems have been in favor of whatever the administration's not doing: *We need more troops! But we also need a massive redeployment! We need to police Iraq with the light dress-down-Friday touch the Brits use! But we also need heavier body armor!* The incoherence of these positions suggests that the Dems are invested in them only as useful cudgels du jour. They don't mean any of it. They don't want victory, they want out.

On the other hand, it's beginning to look as if things aren't so very different over on the GOP side. The Baker "study group" is an almost parodic exercise in grandee committee construction: not just Vernon Jordan but Sandra Day O'Connor! In the driving seat, though, are the unreal "realists" wedded to the same Middle East "stability" that gave us 9/11. The same Bush 41 crowd who wanted to keep the Soviet Union going even after the Politburo had given up on it, the same Zbigniew Brzezinski whose big idea in the Seventies was outsourcing Afghan destabilization to the House of Saud and Pakistan's ISI, the same realpolitik guys who got the last 30 years entirely wrong—they're all back in favor in D.C., and with the old confidence in their voice. November 7 was a vote for September 10, and a strange Pelosi-Baker alliance of the unwilling is ready to oblige. **NR**

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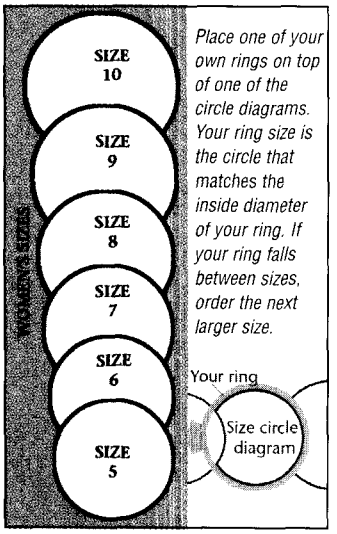
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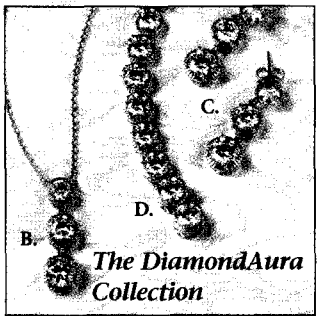

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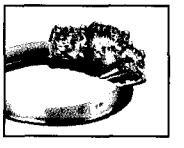

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